



HOBO MEMORIES OF THE TEXAS MADMAN

FOREWORD

I BEGAN GETTING REQUESTS TO WRITE AN IN-DEPTH AUTOBIOGRAPHY, REALLY I THOUGHT?, DO THESE FOLKS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE ASKING? O.K. I'LL DO THIS BUT BE PREPARED TO HEAR ABOUT A SECTION OF AMERICAN LIFE THAT HAS EXISTED SINCE THE CREATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR (WHICH IS A MISNOMER, BECAUSE LIKE AXYL ROSE OF THE BAND GUNS AND ROSE'S SAID: "WHAT'S SO CIVIL ABOUT WAR?") AND YOU'LL FIND THAT MY PEOPLE (THE HOBO'S) ARE AS FOREIGN TO YOU AS ANYBODY FROM A MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRY OR ANY FOREIGN LAND, THIS WILL SUPPORT MY CLAIM THAT THE HOBO CULTURE IS A NATION WITHIN THE UNITED STATES! I MUST WARN YOU THAT THE WAY I WRITE YOU'LL BE EXPOSED TO MY PERSONAL FEELINGS AND IMPRESSIONS NOT ONLY ABOUT MY PEOPLE, BUT ABOUT THE WAY THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY TREATS PEOPLE OF A LESSER SOCIAL, AND FINANCIAL STATURE THAN THE SO-CALLED NORMAL SOCIETY - AS SLAVES AND/OR WHIPPING BOYS, ONLY THERE TO BE EXPLOITED, AND THEN THROWN AWAY. AND LIKE THE 1ST BOOK THE TEXAS MADMAN'S HOBO COMPENDIUM, WITH THE CONDENSED VERSION OF MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY I'LL SAY "I'M NOT WRITING AN ADVENTURE STORY LIKE THAT OF JACK LONDON OR ERNEST HEMINGWAY, BUT I'LL BE WRONG." THE LIFE I LEAD IS THAT OF A BREED OF MEN WHO WON'T SIT STILL (TO USE A LINE FROM THE ROBERT SERVICE POEM - THE MEN WHO WON'T FIT IN), IN MY OWN WORDS I DID LIVE AN ADVENTURE AND MUST WRITE ONE TO ENTERTAIN YOU. IT WAS ALWAYS MY DESIRE TO INCISE YOU TO PUT DOWN YOUR SMART PHONE, LEAVE THE INTERNET ALONE, TURN OFF THE "BOOB TUBE," TURN ON A

LAMP, SIT QUIETLY, CRACK THE BINDINGS OF A BOOK, AND GO BACK TO THE OLD FASHIONED STYLE OF ENTERTAINMENT, READING, USING YOUR BRAIN, AND YOUR IMAGINATION, EXPANDING YOUR THOUGHT PROCESS, YOUR INTELLIGENCE, AND YOUR OWN EDIFICATION!

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CHAPTER 1

TO BEGIN WITH I AM NOT A RICH MAN, GRANTED I HAVE ASPIRATIONS TO ATTAIN THIS LIFE OF FINANCIAL FLUIDITY BUT AS OF THIS WRITING I'M STILL RIDING THE BUS. PEOPLE WHO RIDE THE CITY BUS COME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, LIKE THE WAY I STARTED OUT MY LIFE AS A CHILD OF 2 BEING CARRIED ONTO A PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD FREIGHT TRAIN BY MY MOTHER TO HAVE MY FACE IN THE WIND, AND SEE THE SUNSET FROM A STEEL BEAST. WHEELS SINGING, RAILS CLIKETY-CLACKING, CARS ROCKING LIKE A CRADLE LULING ME INTO A STEADY RHYTHM, LIKE THE HEARTBEATS OF LIFE THAT MOVES ALL PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY OF LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST. I DON'T OFFER MY LIFE AS AN EXAMPLE FOR MOST OF MAINSTREAM AMERICA TO FOLLOW, YET MY 64 YEARS HAVE BEEN AN ADVENTURE THAT MOST PEOPLE ONLY DREAM ABOUT, STILL I OFFER THIS WRITING AS A STAND-IN FOR MOST AMERICANS TO FANTASIZE ABOUT, AND NOT TO EMULATE. TO PUT A POINT ON THIS I DON'T WANT YOU TO LIVE LIKE I HAVE AND CERTAINLY DON'T GO JUMP A FREIGHT TRAIN, THEY'RE DIRTY, AND DANGEROUS, THE LIFE I LIVED WAS LONELY AT TIMES, EXPOSED TO THE ELEMENTS, AND OTHER DANGERS, BUT IT WAS ALSO THE EPITOME OF BEING FREE. THE KIND OF FREEDOM THAT THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD INTENDED ALL PEOPLE TO LIVE, BEING AS CLOSE TO AN EAGLE AS A PERSON COULD BECOME. I FEEL I SHOULD START WITH THE WAY I WAS BORN BUT TO DO THAT I MUST GO BACK FURTHER TO WHEN MY MOTHER WAS BORN, THIS IS NOT AVOIDING THE ISSUE, BUT RATHER ADDRESSING IT'S ORIGINS. WITH THAT IN MIND LET ME START OFF WITH THE FACT THAT MY MOTHER WAS BORN IN A DAY AND AN AGE WHEN CHILDREN DID NOT DISOBEY OR QUESTION THE AUTHORITY OF THEIR PARENTS, OR OTHER ADULT FIGURES IN

THEIR LIVES. AND IN THAT DAY AND AGE THERE WAS ALSO AN ECONOMIC HARDSHIP CALLED THE DEPRESSION, A SITUATION THAT WAS BROUGHT ON IN NEW YORK CITY, AT THE STOCK EXCHANGE BY SPECULATORS WHO CAUSED THE DEVALUATION OF THE DOLLAR. THIS WAS THE REASON THAT CAUSED MANY SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FOR PEOPLE, AT ONE TIME A PERSON WOULD HAVE TO PUSH A WHEELBARROW FULL OF DOLLARS TO THE STORE TO BUY A SINGLE LOAF OF BREAD.

MANY COULD NOT AFFORD TO DO THIS AND SO THEIR REASONING WAS TO CUT DOWN ON THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE AT HOME, ABANDONING SEVERAL FAMILY MEMBERS - OFTEN CHILDREN. MY MOTHER'S OWN MOTHER WAS THE KIND OF PERSON WHO COULD NOT ALLOW ANY CHILD TO BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD AND WOULD ADOPT THEM, TAKING CARE OF THEM AS ONLY A MOTHER COULD. BUT BY THE TIME THE DEPRESSION BECAME THE NORM IN OUR COUNTRY MY MOTHER'S MOTHER WAS FORCED TO TURN MANY AWAY, THIS WAS THE REASON WHY I WAS TOLD BY MOM, AND RELATED IN MY PREVIOUS BOOK THAT SHE AND 12 OTHER CHILDREN WERE TOLD "YOU MUST LEAVE HOME AND FEND FOR YOURSELF, I CAN NOT AFFORD TO FEED YOU ANYMORE." SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATIONS HAD FORCED THIS UPON HER, AS WELL AS MANY OTHER FAMILIES AND SO MY MOTHER, AT AGE 13 HITCHIKED OUT OF HER HOMETOWN OF LAMPASSAS TEXAS INTO TEMPLE 13 MILES AWAY. GETTING A WAITRESS JOB, ONE EVENING, SHE STATED, SHE WAS CURIOUS ABOUT THE FREIGHT TRAIN AT THE MISSOURI KANSAS TEXAS RAILROAD YARD OFFICE AND WERE IT MIGHT TAKE HER, SO ONE NIGHT SHE CLIMBED ABOARD AN MKT FREIGHT TRAIN WHICH TOOK HER NORTH TO FT. WORTH, THERE SHE ENROLLED IN CLASSES TO LEARN THE JOB OF NURSING, THIS WOULD BECOME AN ON-DEMAND AREA OF EMPLOYMENT. MOM COULD ENTER THIS MARKET OF EMPLOYMENT IN ANY CITY SHE WOULD BECOME A CITIZEN OF, BUT MOM ALSO ENJOYED THE TRAVEL AND AESTHETIC PLEASURE IN THE ART OF FREIGHT TRAIN RIDING (OR HOBOING) AS MOST OF US HAVE ENJOYED IN THE COURSE OF OUR TRAVELS.

TRAVELS, WHAT DOES THIS CALL UP IN A PAST MEMORY?, RIDING IN A CAR WITH A FAMILY LONG DISTANCE TO VISIT OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS?, POSSIBLY VISITING GRANDPARENTS?, LONG DISTANCES IN AN OLD CAR OR STATIONWAGON? A COUGHING, WHEEZING, MACHINE THAT YOUR FATHER WOULD KEEP RUNNING WITH WHATEVER TRICKS HE LEARNED EITHER IN A WARTIME EVENT OR WHILE IN ANY BRANCH OF THE MILITARY. WORKING ON JEEP'S, DEUCE-AND-A-HALF'S, WITH TRICKS LEARNED IN SUCH SITUATIONS

AND/OR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICES YOUR FATHER WOULD KEEP THIS RELIC ALIVE USING EXTRA BOLTS, WIRE, AND WD-40, IT WAS A RUSTY, NOISY, RELIC OF ANOTHER TIME THAT YOU FELT SHOULD HAVE BEEN TRADED IN FOR A NEWER MODEL. YET IT CONTINUED TO RUN BECAUSE OF YOUR FATHER, AND IT ALWAYS HAD THAT EXHAUST LEAK THAT WOULD COME INSIDE FROM A MYSTERY LOCATION THAT NO ONE COULD EVER FIND, AND YOU WOULD ALWAYS WANT TO RIDE "SHOTGUN" WITH YOUR BROTHERS OR SISTERS, OR BOTH, AVOIDING HAVING TO SIT IN THE "DREADED" MIDDLE. THAT STYLE OF FAMILY TRAVEL!, TO THOSE OF US WHO HAVE LIVED THROUGH THIS STYLE OF VACATION TRAVEL, OR SIMILAR MODES, THIS CAN BE EITHER A PLEASANT OR HAUNTING MEMORY DEPENDING ON THE EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE. IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD ALL PEOPLE, NO MATTER THEIR CULTURE OR SOCIAL STANDING, CAN INTERRELATE IN AT LEAST ONE (AND POSSIBLY MORE) ASPECT(S) OF THEIR LIVES AND YET THE CULTURE I GREW UP IN, THE HOBO CULTURE, IS ALWAYS EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION, THE BELIEF HERE IS THAT THESE PEOPLE (MY PEOPLE) ARE NOTHING MORE THAN CRIMINALS. BUT HAVING LIVED MORE THAN A HALF CENTURY IN THIS WORLD I CAN STATE THAT HOBO'S (AND YES, I CONSIDER MYSELF ONE OF THEM) ARE AN IDENTIFIABLE CULTURE, A NATION WITHIN THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

MY MOTHER WORKED SEVERAL JOBS IN HER LIFE, AND EVENTUALLY STARTED TRAVELING WITH A MAN, WHOSE NAME WAS (NO I'M NOT JOKING, AND NO I'M NOT A HIGHLANDER LIKE THE ADRIAN PAUL SHOW HINTS AT) CONNER MACLEOD. THEY BOTH ENJOYED EACH OTHERS COMPANY AND WOULD FREQUENTLY FIND THEMSELVES SPENDING THE WINTER UP NORTH, SPECIFICALLY IN THE METROPOLITAN CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS INDIANA. CONNER WORKING IN HIS ORIGINAL TRADE OF A DIESEL MECHANIC, MOM WORKING AS A NURSE, THEY DID THIS BECAUSE CONNER MISSED HIS HOMETOWN OF DUNBLANE SCOTLAND WHICH WAS JUST AS COLD AND SNOWY AS INDIANAPOLIS AND MOM WAS IN LOVE (OR LUST). ONE SUMMER IN 1958 MOM STARTED FEELING SOME DISCOMFORT IN HER UPPER ABDOMEN AND AFTER SEEING A DOCTOR FOUND OUT SHE WAS "KNOCKED UP" WITH ME, MOM, AFTER YEARS AWAY, BEGAN MISSING HER HOMETOWN AND THIS YEAR WAS NO DIFFERENT. SO MOM CONVINCED CONNER TO TRAVEL WITH HER SOUTH, THEIR IDEA WAS TO HEAD OUT FOR EAST ST. LOUIS ILLINOIS, THEN DOWN TO DUPO, AND CATCH A COTTON BELT FREIGHT TRAIN FURTHER SOUTH TO HER HOME STATE OF TEXAS, THEY BOTH COULD GET WORK AND MOM COULD GIVE BIRTH TO ME. AS WELL AS LIVE FOR THE WINTER IN AN AREA WITH LIGHT RAINS BUT NO SNOW, AND CERTAINLY NO ARCTIC BLASTS, ICE STORMS, OR BLIZZARD

CONDITIONS, HOWEVER THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD DISPATCHER HAD OTHER IDEAS SEEING THERE WAS INDUSTRY AND A COAL STRIP MINE SOUTH OF THE TOWN OF BRAZIL IN THE TOWN OF CENTERPOINT.

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD FREIGHT TRAIN THAT THEY JUMPED THAT DAY, IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 1958, ONLY WENT AS FAR WEST AS BRAZIL. BOTH MOM AND CONNER SAID "CRIKEY" (WELL NOT THAT, ACTUALLY THEY HAD A LOT MORE COLORFUL AND EXPRESSIVE WORDS BUT I'M TRYING TO KEEP THAT LANGUAGE OUT OF THIS BOOK AND MAKE SURE THAT ANY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY, NO MATTER HOW YOUNG OR OLD, CAN READ IT WITHOUT COMPLAINT) AND ENDED UP GETTING A RAILROAD APARTMENT, THEY WERE CLOSE TO THE RAILROAD'S MAIN LINE, LOW RENT FOR SURE, BUT RAILROAD EMPLOYEES WEREN'T PAID AS WELL IN THOSE DAYS AS THEY ARE NOW. MOM AND MY BIOLOGICAL FATHER BECAME EMPLOYED, MOM WORKING AS A WAITRESS AT THE BLUEBONNET CAFE, A TRUCKSTOP/RESTAURANT THAT IS STILL THERE TODAY! CONNER BECAME EMPLOYED AT A DIESEL GARAGE. IN THE WINTER OF 1959, ON JANUARY 5TH, BOTH MOM AND CONNER HEARD LOUD KNOCKING AT THEIR DOOR AND FOUND IMMIGRATION OFFICERS, CONNER HAD BEEN AN ILLEGAL ALIEN FROM SCOTLAND FOR MANY YEARS, THEY HAD SHOWED UP AND TO TAKE HIM INTO CUSTODY. AND TAKE HIM FIRST TO INDIANAPOLIS, THEN TO NEW YORK CITY, AND FINALLY EDINBURGH SCOTLAND, CONNER HEADED FOR DUNBLANE WHICH WAS HIS HOMETOWN, I FOUND THIS OUT WHEN I WAS IN MY 30'S TRYING TO RESEARCH HIS LIFE, AND I COULD TELL MORE ABOUT CONNER'S STORY, BUT THAT WOULD BE DISTRACTING AND RATHER THAN "GO OFF THE RAILS" LET ME STICK WITH WHAT I STARTED WRITING.

ON JANUARY 19TH OF 1959, A 19° DAY, AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF IT WAS RAINING, THAT KIND OF WEATHER GETS IN YOUR BONES AND STAYS THERE, CAUSING YOUR JOINTS TO ACHE HORRIBLY, IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF THIS DAY MOM SAID SHE WAS IN THE DELIVERY ROOM OF THE CLAY COUNTY HOSPITAL LAYING ON HER BACK, LEGS SPREAD, AND I CAME OUT HEAD FIRST KICKING AND SCREAMING, AND SHE SAID SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT I WAS SAYING, "IT'S TOO COLD OUT HERE, PUT ME BACK, PUT ME BACK". 2 SPRINGS LATER, WHEN SHE FELT SHE HAD SAVED UP ENOUGH MONEY, MOM WENT TO THE BLUEBONNET CAFE AND RECEIVED HER LAST PAYCHECK AND HER TIPS, SHE THEN WENT TO THE BANK AND CLOSED OUT HER ACCOUNT, CAME TO THE RAILROAD APARTMENT, PACKED UP CLOTHES, FOOD, AND ME, AND WALKED ACROSS THE BACKYARD. SHE USED TO REFER TO THE TRAIN YARD AS

THE BACKYARD, BECAUSE THE TRAIN YARD WAS WHERE THE BACKYARD SHOULD BE, SO IN EFFECT OUR BACKYARD WAS A TRAIN YARD! (SORRY, IT'S A HOBO JOKE BUT YOU MIGHT LAUGH AT IT ANYWAY) MOM SAID WE WAITED AT THE TRAIN YARD OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD FOR 4 HOURS BEFORE A FREIGHT TRAIN STOPPED, IT COULD HAVE BEEN LONGER BUT I COULDN'T TELL YOU, I WAS ONLY 2 AT THE TIME! WELL WHEN THIS TRAIN STOPPED MOM WATCHED EVERY CAR ROLLING BY AND SPOTTED WHAT SHE WAS LOOKING FOR, YOU GUESSED IT, A BOXCAR, SHE LOADED US UP AND WITHIN 30 MINUTES THE TRAIN STARTED ROLLING WEST TOWARDS VINCENNES, AND TERRE HAUTE INDIANA, PLUS EFFINGHAM, BLOOMINGTON, AND EAST ST. LOUIS ILLINOIS. FROM THERE SHE UNLOADED US AND WENT OVER TO A BUS STATION, WE RODE FIRST TO ST. LOUIS, AND THEN ST. CHARLES MISSOURI, FROM THERE SHE BOARDED US ON A SUCCESSION OF MISSOURI KANSAS TEXAS FREIGHT TRAINS ROLLING FROM THE TOWN OF ST. CHARLES TO COLUMBIA, JEFFERSON CITY, AND SEDALIA MISSOURI. FT. SCOTT, PARSONS, AND CHANUTE KANSAS, VINITA, MUSKOGEE, AND WAGONEER OKLAHOMA, DENISON, FT. WORTH, WACO/BELLMEADE, AND TEMPLE TEXAS. AND AT THAT POINT WE BOARDED WHAT WAS KNOWN AS THE "PUDDLE JUMPER" ON THE GULF COLORADO & SANTA FE RIDING INTO LAMPASSAS. WHY DO I MENTION THIS SUCCESSION OF CITIES, AND IN THIS FASHION?, SO YOU (THE READER) CAN CHECK TO SEE IF I'M TELLING THE TRUTH, WHEN YOU CHECK OUT OLD RAILROAD MAPS YOU'LL SEE I'M NOT LYING, AND WHEN YOU SEE I'M NOT LYING THEN I CAN RUB YOUR NOSE IN IT, I BELIEVE YOU'LL FIND I'LL SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS IN A LATER CHAPTER, JUST WATCH, IT'LL HAPPEN, I PROMISE!

CHAPTER 2

MANY OF MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES WILL BE INTERSPERSED THROUGHOUT THIS BOOK, KIND OF LIKE FLASHBACKS THAT INTERRELATE TO WHATEVER EVENT I'M TELLING ABOUT, BUT THIS ONE FITS THE PRESENT NARARATIVE, MY MOTHER STARTED HAVING BREATHING PROBLEMS WHEN I WAS ABOUT 13, I THOUGHT IT WAS FROM WORKING IN A TRUCK STOP, BUT IN REALITY IT WAS A



COMBINATION OF A COUPLE OF OTHER JOBS. MOM HAD MULTIPLE STYLES OF EMPLOYMENT DURING HER HOBOING DAYS AND ONE OF THE STYLES OF EMPLOYMENT WAS FIELD CROP LABOR, DOING MANUAL LABOR IN FIELDS THAT USED UNREGULATED HERBICIDE AND INSECTICIDE SPRAYING, IN HER DAY SUCH UNREGULATED SPRAYING WAS THE NORM, THERE WAS NO OSHA TO PROTECT THE FIELD LABORER, NOR UNION TO BARGAIN FOR WAGES, HEALTH BENEFITS, OR RETIREMENT. RETIREMENT WAS CONSIDERED AS THE LABORER EITHER QUITTING, GETTING OLD, OR CATCHING THE WESTBOUND (DIEING), IT WAS CONSIDERED THE NORM FOR THE LIFE OF A FIELD LABORER, AND CHILDREN WERE USED AS A LABOR SOURCE. THIS WAS IN THE TIME BEFORE CHILD LABOR LAWS, MANY EXPERIENCE THIS SITUATION TODAY, NOT IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS NORTH KOREA, CENTRAL ASIA, CHINA, OR NORTHERN AFRICA. THE KINDS OF FIELD SPRAYING INDUCED A MULTITUDE OF HEALTH PROBLEMS SUCH AS SKIN CANCER, INTERNAL ORGAN MALFUNCTIONS, OR BREATHING PROBLEMS, BUT PEOPLE AT THAT TIME CONSIDERED THIS AN ACCEPTABLE RISK WHEN THEY WERE BEING EMPLOYED AT 40 CENTS A DAY, OR \$5.00 A WEEK. IT WAS TRULY A HORRENDOUS TIME, TO LIVE AS A HOMEBODY, OR A HOBO, AND YET MY MOTHER SURVIVED THESE TIMES TO GIVE BIRTH TO ME, AND MAKE A HOME IN HER HOMETOWN OF LAMPASSAS TEXAS, AT LEAST UP UNTIL SHE "CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND" (US HOBO'S DON'T BELIEVE OUR NUMBER DIE, THEY'RE JUST RIDING THE ULTIMATE TRAIN TO PARADISE)! IT WAS THIS RESILIENCE THAT SHAPED THE UNITED STATES THAT WE ENJOY LIVING IN- IN THIS 21ST CENTURY, IT'S TIME PEOPLE WERE REMINDED OF JUST WHO SET THE STANDARD BY WHICH WE NOW LIVE.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH, IT WAS A QUOTE OFTEN USED TO DESCRIBE PEOPLE WHO LIVED CLOSE TO THE LAND, LIKE FARMERS, WELL I CAN USE THE SAME QUOTE TO DESCRIBE HOBO'S, MY FAMILY (AND THEY TRULY ARE A FAMILY) ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH. AND NONE ARE RELATED BY BLOOD, MORE A COMMONALITY OF LIFE, LOOK TOWARDS THE STATUE OF LIBERTY AND THE QUOTE AT ITS' BASE, "GIVE ME YOUR POOR, YOUR TIRED, HUDDLED MASSES YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE, AND I WILL LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE GOLDEN DOOR," MUCH THE SAME HOBO'S WILL TAKE ALL THE THROWAWAY'S FROM THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY. ALL THE OLD AND YOUNG YOU DON'T WANT, AND WE'LL GIVE THEM A MORE LOVING FAMILY THAT YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO RECREATE, TRUE ONE THAT IS MIGRATORY, BUT ALSO ONE THAT WILL TRAVEL UP TO 1000 MILES TO GIVE HELP TO THAT HOBO FAMILY MEMBER ON EVEN THE HINT OF THEIR NEED. AND THEY WILL ASK FOR NO RECOMPENSE EXCEPT FOR A PLACE TO PITCH A TENT, COOK THEIR FOOD, AND HAVE AN EVENING CAMPFIRE GATHERING!, NOT THE TRAVELING CRIMINALS THAT THE FBI, RR POLICE, AND LOCAL CITY POLICE INTIMATE THAT WE TRULY ARE.



CHAPTER 3

**MY MOTHER
OF US INTO A**

**MOVED THE 2
GANDY**

DANCER CAMP CAR, A BOXCAR ORIGINALLY BUILT TO HOUSE TRACK MAINTENANCE WORKERS WHEN REPAIRING A SECTION OF RAILROAD IN A REMOTE LOCATION. MOM PURCHASED IT IN TEMPLE, IT WAS ROLLED ON THE G.C.& S.F. INTO LAMPASSAS, CRANED OFF THE RAILS, AND MANHANDLED INTO PLACE BY HOBO'S WHO TRAVELED INTO LAMPASSAS ON THE HINT OF HER NEED, WHO ELSE DOES SOMETHING LIKE THIS BUT FAMILY? AND YET OUR GREAT PROTECTORS (THE F.B.I.) STILL CONSIDERS US CRIMINALS, THE ONLY CRIME THAT I REMEMBER THAT THE HOBO'S THAT CONGREGATED IN THE WOODS BEHIND WHERE I LIVED AS A CHILD EVER COMMITTED WAS PUBLIC INTOXICATION. IN THE PAST THERE WERE MANY WHO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE IN A VULNERABLE SITUATION, THEN, BECAUSE FOLKS WERE SUSPICIOUS OF HOBO'S, THESE LEECHES HID AMONGST THOSE IN THE JUNGLE TO DEFER ATTENTION IN ANOTHER DIRECTION. THUS HOBO'S WERE EQUATED WITH THE ROMANY'S (GYPSIES) WHO WERE WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT ENGLAND AND EUROPE TO COMMIT THEFT, AND KIDNAPPING, OR EVEN ASSASSINATION, IT WAS THEIR WAY OF LIFE. BECAUSE FROM THE TIME OF KING GEORGE THE 1ST (AROUND 1600 A.D.) THEY WERE A PEOPLE WITHOUT A NATION, CONSTANTLY MOVING AROUND MANY NATIONS IN EUROPE, AND BECAUSE OF THEIR SECRETIVE CLIQUEISH HABITS OBSERVERS IN THE LATE 1800'S TO EARLY 1900'S ATTACHED A PARALLEL BETWEEN GYPSIES AND HOBO'S. THIS PREJUDICED POINT OF VIEW PERSISTED THROUGHOUT THE 20TH CENTURY ON INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, AND THIS ATTITUDE COVERED MY YOUNGER YEARS, WHEN I WAS GOING TO SCHOOL IN BELTON TEXAS - 2 MILES SOUTH OF LAMPASSAS - THE WORD WAS OUT THAT MY MOTHER WAS A HOBO BEFORE GETTING PREGNANT WITH ME AND SO LIKE ALL RELENTLESS CHILDREN MANY MOUTHED OFF TO ME. THE MOST USED COMMENT WAS BASTARD, WORDS NEVER BOTHERED ME MUCH, OVER THE CENTURIES THERE HAVE BEEN MANY BASTARDS IN ROYAL FAMILIES FROM RUSSIA, FRANCE, ENGLAND, POLAND, ONE OF THE VIKING KINGS HAD A 1/2 BROTHER WHO WAS A BASTARD WHO EVENTUALLY ASCENDED TO THE VIKING THRONE IN NORWAY IN 1644. ERIC THE RED STARTED HIS LIFE AS A BASTARD, THE PRODUCT OF A VIKING MOTHER AND AN IRISH FATHER ERIC LEFT HOME AT AGE 12 TO BECOME A THIEF AND A HIGHWAY ROBBER, BY AGE 20 HE WAS SO EXPERIENCED THAT HE CHALLENGED THE GENERAL OF ALL VIKING FORCES AND FOUGHT THE MAN TO HIS DEATH. ARMED WITH ONLY HIS WAR AXE HE FOUGHT THE GENERAL CHOPPING AND SLICING HIM WITH THE AXE, THE PURPOSE OF A HIERARCHY CHALLENGE AND TRANSFER OF POWER, AFTER KILLING THE VIKING GENERAL ERIC SECURED HIS PLACE IN VIKING HISTORY BY CUTTING HIS VICTIMS HEAD OFF AND DRINKING HIS BLOOD.

LIKE ERIC THE RED MY FAMILY (THE HOBO'S) HAD SIMILAR REPUTATIONS, DOING ANYTHING TO PROTECT THOSE THEY CONSIDERED FAMILY, EVEN TO THE POINT OF HURTING THOSE WHO THREATENED THEIR FAMILY! IT WAS AFTER MY MOTHER CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND (ONCE AGAIN THE REFERENCE TO A HOBO DYING) THAT I LEARNED THE EXTENT TO WHICH MY HOBO FAMILY WOULD GO TO PROTECTING ME, THEY CAME TO ME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TELLING ME THAT STATE AUTHORITIES WERE SIGNING PAPERWORK TO PUT ME IN AN ORPHAN HOME. THESE GUYS WERE THE ONLY FAMILY I HAD KNOWN OTHER THAN MY MOTHER, THEY HELPED ME CARRY RADIOS THAT I REPAIRED WITH TUBES I SALVAGED FROM TRASH PILES (THIS WAS IN THE DAYS OF TUBE TYPE RADIOS, AND LONG BEFORE SOLID STATE CIRCUITS, AND DEFINITELY BEFORE DIGITAL RADIOS) AND TOOK THEM TO TEMPLE SO I COULD SELL THEM TO HELP PAY THE FAMILY BILLS, AND BUY GROCERIES. MESQUITE BEANS, WHEN JUST SPROUTING, ARE TENDER AND SWEETLY SAVORY WHEN COOKED BUT GATHERING THEM ARE A BIT TRICKY BECAUSE THE TREES HAVE 2 INCH LONG THORNS THAT ARE RAZOR SHARP, BUT CAN BE GATHERED WHEN A PERSON WEARS THICK LONG SLEEVES. AND AS LONG AS YOU HAVE SEVERAL FRIENDS, OR HOBO'S WHO ARE HUNGRY ENOUGH THEY CAN BE GATHERED BY THE BUSHEL FULL, MESQUITE TREES BURN LIKE COAL AND WILL EASILY HEAT UP A HOUSE, OR AN OUTDOOR CAMP.

THEY HELPED ME CARRY HOMEMADE CHARCOAL TO TEMPLE TO SELL ON WEEKENDS, THEY DUG "HONEY HOLES" TO MOVE OUR OUTHOUSE (WE DIDN'T HAVE INDOOR PLUMBING) AROUND THE YARD, PUTTING IT IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION AFTER THE ORIGINAL "HONEY HOLE" BECAME FULL AFTER EXCESSIVE USE. THEY PLANTED TREES IN THE OLD LOCATIONS TO MARK THEM SO THAT IF WALKING IN THE DARK A PERSON WOULDN'T STEP ON THE SPOT AND PLUNGE INTO A SLIMY, GREASY, STINKING MESS. THEY COOKED MEALS AFTER MOM CAME HOME TIRED FROM WORKING 16 HOUR DAYS, THEY GAVE US ENTERTAINMENT BY TELLING STORIES AND TALL TALES, AND SINGING SONGS, OR RECITING POETRY, AND I, THE SON OF A LADY HOBO, CALLED THEM AUNT, OR UNCLE FEELING THAT THEY TRULY WERE JUST THAT! THEY ALSO HELPED ME BOARD MY FIRST SOLO TRIP ON A FREIGHT TRAIN, GIVING ME NOT ONLY INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO BOARD A FREIGHT TRAIN, BUT ALSO WHAT CARS ARE GOOD RIDES, AND WHAT CARS ARE JUST A QUICK WAY TO HIDE UNTIL FINDING A BETTER CONCEALING AND COMFORTABLE RIDE TO GO A LONG DISTANCE.

AND ALSO WHICH RAILROADS ARE FRIENDLY TO HOBO'S AND WHICH RAILROADS ARE TO BE AVOIDED LIKE THE PLAGUE, AND SO, IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS, BEFORE THE SUN WOULD BEGIN LIGHTING UP THE WESTERN SKY, I BOARDED THE "PUDDLE JUMPER" WHICH ROLLED ALONG AT 10 MPH TO TEMPLE WHERE I NEEDED TO CATCH A NORTHBOUND MKT UP TO FT. WORTH. THAT EVENING I BOARDED A BOXCAR AT THE KATY STATION WITH THE FULL INTENTION OF HEADING NORTH BUT AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF WAITING FOR THE TRAIN TO MOVE I LAID OUT THE BEDROLL I HAD WITH ME, AFTER GETTING HIGH ON ADRENALINE FROM FINALLY JUMPING A G.C.&S.F. TRAIN OUT OF LAMPASSAS I PASSED OUT AND DEEPLY SLEPT UNTIL THE NEXT SUNRISE, MEANWHILE THE MKT TRAIN TURNED OUT TO BE A LOCAL DELIVERY AND I WOKE THE NEXT MORNING 1/4 OF A MILE OVER IN THE G.C. & S.F. YARD. SO I MADE A SECOND ATTEMPT THAT NEXT DAY AND SUCCEEDED MAKING IT THROUGH TO FT. WORTH AND THE KATY YARD WHICH IS VERY CLOSE TO HELL'S HALF ACRE, THE VERY SAME LOCATION THAT WAS THE TEMPORARY HOME OF BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID. I WASN'T STAYING IN FT. WORTH FOR LONG, LIKE ANY MAJOR METROPOLITAN CITY MADE UP OF SEVERAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES, FT. WORTH IS NO DIFFERENT, ON THE WESTSIDE IS WHITE SETTLEMENT, & BENBROOK. TO THE SOUTH IS CLEBURN, TO THE EAST IS ARLINGTON, TO THE NORTH IS ALLIANCE, & SAGINAW. THE LATTER IS THE COMMUNITY THAT I NEEDED TO GET UP TO, THIS IS THE LOCATION OF THE B.N. YARD (NOW IT'S THE B.N.S.F.) BUT THIS IS ALSO A 9 MILE DIFFERENCE IN DISTANCE.

I WAS NOT WELL VERSED IN THE LOCAL CITY BUS SCHEDULES AND NEGOTIATING THE FT. WORTH CITY BUS SYSTEM SO I LOCKED MY PROPERTY IN THE GREYHOUND BUS STATION, IN ONE OF LOCKERS AND WALKED OVER TO THE CITY LIBRARY. REALIZE THIS WAS A TIME BEFORE THE PLENTIFUL NATURE OF THE INTERNET, THAT WONDERFUL INVENTION ORIGINALLY CREATED BY THE U.S. MILITARY FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SERVICES AND AGENCIES WITHIN OUR GOVERNMENT. THE OBTAINING OF INFORMATION BY CITIZENS MIGHT BE EASIER THEN IF THE INTERNET WAS MORE ACCESSIBLE, BUT IT WAS NOT THE CASE, THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION WAS DONE BY BOOK RESEARCH, THUS LOOKING AT MAP BOOKS, RECORDING ADDRESSES, AND USING PERSONAL REASONING, JUST LIKE A POLICE DETECTIVE.

AFTER LOCATING THE CITY AND RAILROAD YARD I STARTED CHECKING THE CITY BUS SYSTEM AND FOUND THERE WAS NO BUS TO, OR NEAR THE TRAIN

YARD, THIS LEFT ME WITH ONE OPTION - WALK - 9 MILES IN 101° HEAT, BEING RAISED IN TEXAS I WAS ALREADY ACCLIMATED SUCH HIGH HEAT, BUT NOT AS A 13 YEAR OLD, IN 101° TEMPERATURES, WALKING 9 MILES, DURING THE HOTTEST TIME OF THE DAY, AND CARRYING AN 80 LB. BACKPACK. BY THE TIME I MADE IT TO THE TRAIN YARD I WAS SO TIRED I LAID DOWN IN SOME HIGH GRASS AND SLEPT UNTIL SUNDOWN, A WESTBOUND PULLED IN, SO FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTION OF THE OLD HOBO'S I STARTED SCANNING THE TRAIN LOOKING FOR A CAR TO RIDE. SOMEWHAT OF A MILITARY ACTIVITY BUT REALIZE MOST HOBO'S WERE (AND STILL ARE) PRIOR MILITARY VETERANS, SUCH TRAINING SERVED THEM WELL IN THESE ACTS.

CHAPTER 4

NOW IT WAS TIME TO PUT ALL THIS INFORMATION INTO PRACTICE, I WATCHED AS THE BULL (RAILROAD POLICE) SCANNED THE FREIGHT TRAIN, SEARCHING FOR OBVIOUS MECHANICAL PROBLEMS, BROKEN BRAKE HOSES, LOOSE DOORS, CRACKED COUPLERS, SHIFTING LOADS, AND, OF COURSE, HOBO'S. AFTER THIS PERSON ROLLED THE ENTIRE TRAIN FROM LOCOMOTIVE TO CABOOSE I WALKED TO THE TRAIN SPOTTING THE CAR I WANTED TO RIDE AS I WALKED, CLIMBED ON BOARD, AND HID UNTIL THE TRAIN STARTED MOVING. AS I ROLLED WEST THE TRAIN PASSED A LARGE GRAIN ELEVATOR WHERE MANY HOBO'S HAVE SIGNED THEIR MONIKERS, MONIKERS ARE WHAT HOBO'S CALL THEMSELVES, THIS IS A TRADITION, WHEN TRAVELING HOBO'S USE MONIKERS AS THEIR NAME. IN YEARS PAST, BACK IN THE MID 1700'S MILITARY AGENTS (MILITARY INTELLIGENCE) USED CODE NAMES TO MOVE ABOUT THE GENERAL PUBLIC, MAKING CONTACTS WITH OPPOSING FORCES, GENERAL CLOAK AND DAGGER OPERATIONS, MUCH OF THIS STYLE OF NAME REPLACEMENT BECAME A NORMAL ACTIVITY WHEN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR WAS OVER. MANY OF THESE WAR AGENTS JUMPED FREIGHT TRAINS SEEING FREIGHT TRAINS WERE USED BY BOTH MILITARIES, CONFEDERATE AND UNION, AS RESUPPLY AND TROOP TRANSPORT TRAINS DURING THE CIVIL WAR, THESE MILITARY AGENTS RODE THE FREIGHT TRAIN'S ORIGINALLY HEADING HOME ONLY TO FIND THAT THEIR HOMES NO LONGER EXISTED. WITH NOTHING TO GIVE THEM A REASON TO STAY IN WHAT WAS HOME, THE HOME THEY REMEMBERED DURING THEIR TIME OF WAR, THESE FORMER MILITARY AGENTS COLLECTED WHAT EVER MIGHT BE LEFT OF THESE HOMES, PERSONAL ITEMS, AND PIECES OF THEIR PAST LIFE THAT MIGHT AID THEM IN THEIR QUEST TO FIND A NEW HOME. BUT SOME OF THESE MEN ENDED UP CONTINUING TO TRAVEL AS THIS MODE OF TRANSPORTATION GAVE THEM A COST FREE WAY TO VENTURE FORTH, THE LIFESTYLE THEY WERE USED TO, THAT

OF A FIELD SOLDIER LIVING IN THE OPEN, RESUPPLYING BY HUNTING AND FISHING, OR BARTERING, BECAME STANDARDS FOR THEIR NEW LIFE OF HOBOING. AND THEY BEGAN CALLING THE RAILS THEIR HOME, TRAVELING THE UNITED STATES, WHICH WAS RECONSTRUCTING AFTER BEING LEFT IN DISARRAY FROM THE WAR, THEY WANDERED AROUND LOOKING FOR NEW HORIZONS, LITERALLY THE LEWIS'S AND CLARK'S OF THE RAILS, AND NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT THIS MIGHT BE THE FIRST TIME SUCH A PARALLEL HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT HOBO'S!

THESE SIGNS, OR MONIKERS COVERED THE ENTIRE SOUTH WALL OF THE ELEVATOR WITH NAMES LIKE **WATER BED LOU** WHO WAS A **NAVY SEAL** WITH BACK PROBLEMS GAINED FROM COMBAT, HE AND SEVEN OTHER MEMBERS OF THIS BRANCH OF THE **NAVY** INVESTED IN A SMALL COMPANY IN **ROSEVILLE CALIFORNIA**. THE EXPRESS PURPOSE WAS CREATE A MATTRESS OR BED THAT WOULD IMITATE THE RELAXING NATURE OF FLOTATION, AFTER SPENDING SEVERAL RETIREMENT CHECKS THEY INVENTED A BED WITH MULTIPLE CELLS OF WATER THAT WOULD IMITATE THE FLOTATION OF LAYING ON YOUR BACK IN THE OCEAN THUS GIVING SUPPORT TO THE SPINE. THIS PATENTED THE FIRST OF WHAT WOULD BECOME THE SALES OF MILLIONS OF FLOTATION SLEEP BEDS, ALSO CALLED **WATER BEDS**, WHICH IS HOW LOU RECEIVED HIS MONIKER - **WATER BED LOU**.

KING ED TRAMP WAS ANOTHER IN A LONG LINE OF WALKING PEOPLE OR TRAMPS, NO, NOT THE GUYS WHO WANDER AROUND IN THE DOWNTOWN AREAS OF MOST CITIES, WEARING DIRTY, SMELLY, PISS STAINED CLOTHES, WHO BEG FOR SPARE CHANGE, CIGARETTES, OR AGGRESSIVELY TRY TO INTIMIDATE YOU TO GIVE UP EVERYTHING IN YOUR POCKET. THOSE ARE THE LEECHES I DESCRIBED IN AN EARLIER CHAPTER, THESE TRAMPS ARE ACTUALLY FORMER **MILITARY, INFANTRY**, THE WORD TRAMP HAS A MEANING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW, TRAMPING REFERS TO WALKING WHICH IS WHAT INFANTRY DOES. THIS GOES BACK TO THE **W.W. 1** MARCHING SONG "TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP, THE BOYS ARE TRAMPING," THIS INFANTRY CAME HOME TO THE UNITED STATES AND CONTINUED TO WALK WHEREVER THEY WANTED TO GO. EVEN FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA, THIS WOULD TAKE AN ENTIRE LIFETIME, TRAVELING FROM CITY TO CITY, TOWN TO TOWN, FARM TO FARM, EVERY RESOURCE THE UNITED STATES HAD TO OFFER TO PEOPLE WHO WORK HARD FOR THEIR DINNER. THE HISTORY AND STORIES THESE PEOPLE COULD RELATE, FROM THE FORMATION OF THIS COUNTRY TO ITS PRESENT CONTINUING STATE, THIS IS WHAT THE

DESCENDENTS OF TRAMPING INFANTRY INHERITED, AND BECAUSE THERE IS ALSO A HIERARCHY AMONG TRAMPS, ED CAMPAINED FOR KING OF THE TRAMPS, THE MOST FAMOUS OF THEM ALL, ED CONTINUED TRAMPING VISITING EVERY PLACE KNOWN TO THE UNITED STATES, AND LEFT HIS MONIKER ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING THIS GRAIN ELEVATOR. THESE AND 80 OTHERS ARE SIGNED TO THIS WALL, REMINDERS OF DAYS GONE BY AND THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED FORGE THE U.S, THE UNSUNG HEROES OF OUR HISTORY.

THIS IS THE SCENERY THAT I WAS WATCHING AS THIS STEEL BEAST ROLLED WESTWARD TOWARDS THE SETTING SUN, AND SWIFTLY ROLLING THE FLAT, ARID PLAINS OF NORTH TEXAS HEADING THROUGH THE TOWNS OF BOWIE, HENRIETTA, INTO WICHITA FALLS. ON MY WAY WEST I PASSED THE DESERT PLAINS WHERE YOU CAN SEE WILD CAMELS WANDERING THROUGH THE BRUSH AND SANDY HILLS, DESCENDANTS OF AN AMERICAN EXPERIMENT WITH CAMELS TO BECOME THE MOUNTS FOR CALVARY SOLDIERS, A GIFT FROM AN ARABIAN PRINCE WHO USED CAMELS AS MOUNTS FOR HIS FORCES. HIS IDEA WAS THAT THE WESTERN UNITED STATES WAS ARID ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE CAMELS, AND THEY COULD TRAVEL DAYS WITHOUT WATER, HE FELT THEY WOULD BE IDEAL FOR THE AMERICAN CAVALRY, HIS IDEA FAILED, BUT BECAME THE BASIS FOR A SATIRICAL MOVIE IN THE 1980'S ENTITLED "HAWMPS, STARRING ACTOR NEVILLE BRAND!"

SO FURTHER UP THE TRACKS WE GO, CROSSING THE ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD AT BOWIE WHERE A BRANCH OF THE G.C.& S.F. CROSSED OVERHEAD ON AN ANCIENT TRESTLE, BOWIE HAS 2 CLAIMS OF FAME:

1. IT WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE NEPHEW OF GENERAL BOWIE, THE SAME BOWIE THAT CREATED THE OVERLY LARGE BOWIE KNIFE.

2. IT'S THE HOME OF THE NATIONAL AMARILLO RACES, NO I'M NOT KIDDING YOU, THE FREAKING THINGS ARE FAST, EXTREMELY FAST, THEY'VE BEEN KNOWN TO OUT RUN A MOTOCROSS BIKE AT FULL SPEED. AND THEY'RE HILARIOUSLY FUNNY, ANYTHING THAT DISTURBS THE HAIRS ON THEIR BACKS WILL CAUSE THEM TO SCREAM AND JUMP 4 1/2 FEET IN THE AIR, LIKE A LIVE WHACK-A-MOLE GAME!, THE PLAINS OF NORTH TEXAS CAN BE ENTERTAINING IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK.



CHAPTER 5

SO HERE I AM ROLLING WEST PAST A FIELD IN THE PLAINS AREA, WITH THE VIBRATIONS OF THE TRAIN CAUSING THE ARMADILLO'S TO SCREAM AND LEAP INTO THE AIR, IT RESEMBLED A PAN OF BROWN SCREAMING JIFFY POP, AND

IT'LL TAKE A LONG TIME TO GET THAT IMAGE TO LEAVE MY HEAD! IT WAS AN AMUSING DISPLAY OF NATURE, MUCH LIKE THE STORIES IN THE BOOK "ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL, IT'S TITLE FROM THE POEM OF THE SAME NAME, ALTHOUGH THIS WAS THE SLIGHTLY DEMENTED VERSION, THE NEXT TOWN WE ROLLED THROUGH WAS NAMED HENRIETTA. IT WAS A CONNECTION OF B.N. WITH THE MKT RAILROAD'S, THE LATTER OF WHICH CAME OUT OF WHITESBORO, ROLLING THROUGH RINGGOLD, TO COME INTO HENRIETTA, WHY DO I MENTION THIS TOWN? THE MKT RAILROAD HAD THE MOST BIZZARE CONSTRUCTION IN THE MOST UNUSUAL PLACES, JAY GOULD, THE RAILROADS CREATOR/OWNER, DECIDED THAT HIS RAILROAD WOULD BE A VISUAL COMPETITION TO OTHER RAILROAD'S PASSENGERS, MANY OF THEM INVESTORS. AT HENRIETTA THE RAILROAD HAD TO CLIMB, OR DESCEND, DEPENDING ON THE DIRECTION OF THE FREIGHT/PASSENGER TRAIN, ON A VOLCANIC HILL AT THE EAST SIDE OF THE TOWN, ORIGINALLY CALLED "THE STAIRCASE" IT ACTUALLY WAS A CONNECTION OF 7 HORSESHOE CURVES, (TAKE THAT HORSESHOE CURVE: ALTOONA PA.) IN HENRIETTA PUSHER ENGINES WERE ADDED TO ASCEND OR DESCEND DEPENDING ON THE TRAINS DIRECTION. BUT SOMETIMES THE TRAIN WOULD BE TOO HEAVY AND LONG, THE RAILROAD HAD EXTRA INSURANCE TO PAY CITIZENS WHOSE HOUSES WERE DESTROYED BY FREQUENT DERAILMENTS, HENRIETTA WAS JUST A FARMING TOWN, BUT IT'S MAIN INCOME/INDUSTRY WAS FROM INSURANCE CLAIMS FILED AGAINST THE MKT OVER THE FREQUENT DERAILMENTS.

BUT THE VISUAL OF THIS UNIQUE ASCENT/DESCENT WAS ONE OF MANY PHOTOGRAPHED SCENES USED AS PROMOTIONS TO ADVERTISE FOR PASSENGERS ON THE MANY "FLYER" TRAINS THIS RAILROAD MAINTAINED, AT HENRIETTA THE 2 RAILROAD'S CONNECTED AT THE TRAIN STATION. WHICH ALSO HOUSED THE POLICE STATION, CITY HALL, A GENERAL STORE, AND A HOT MINERAL WATER SPA, WHEN YOU LIVE IN A TOWN WITH A UNIQUE PROTRUSION TO THE EAST, THAT IS ALSO VOLCANIC, ONE OF ONLY 2 SUCH VOLCANIC AREAS OF THE STATE, YOU USE EVERY RESOURCE TO KEEP YOUR TOWN THRIVING, ONLY IN TEXAS! THE NEXT VISUAL COMPETITION IS THE PARALLEL TRACKAGE THAT RAN FROM HENRIETTA TO WICHITA FALLS, THIS WAS A STYLE OF RAILROADING USUALLY USED IN CONSTRUCTION BY THE ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD (CHICAGO ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC), THIS AREA WAS ANOTHER SECTION OF TEXAS PLAINS WHERE BOTH B.N. AND MKT COULD RACE EACH OTHER. A STEEL RAIL DRAG RACE, ANOTHER VISUAL PROMOTION FOR EACH RAILROAD TO CAPITALIZE ON, AS WELL AS THE WICHITA FALLS STAR TELEGRAM AND THE FORT WORTH TRIBUNE, IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THIS

PART OF TEXAS NEWSPAPERS LOOKED FOR ANY NEWS FOR ENTERTAINMENT TO PROMOTE IN THEIR RESPECTIVE PAPERS. EVEN A DRAG RACE BETWEEN RAILROAD'S BROUGHT PEOPLE OUT BY THE THOUSANDS, PICNIC LUNCHES WERE PACKED, PEOPLE LINED THE TRACK TO SEE WHICH RAILROAD WOULD MAKE IT TO TOWN FIRST DEPENDING ON WHICH TOWN THEY WERE RACING TO. LIKE I SAID - ANY NEWS, ANY ENTERTAINMENT - IN THAT TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THIS PART OF TEXAS IT WAS EITHER WATCH TRAINS RACE, OBSERVE CITY GUN FIGHTS, DRINK, OR STAY HOME AND INCREASE THE FAMILIES POPULATION, AND THE LATTER IS NOTHING I WISH TO EXPOUND UPON, THIS COULD BE SUBJECT MATERIAL FOR MANY X-RATED STORIES, BOOKS, OR MOVIES, MAKE YOUR OWN ENTERTAINMENT - BUT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!

ROLLING INTO WICHITA FALLS IS ALWAYS WELCOME FOR ME, WORK PROSPECTS ARE PLENTIFUL WITH THE BEST AVAILABLE FOR ME TO PURSUE IS THAT OF NATIONAL LINEN, LOCATED 1/8TH OF A MILE NORTH OF DOWNTOWN WICHITA FALLS, ALONG SIDE THE MKT YARD. PITCHING CAMP IS ANOTHER PROSPECT, IN YEARS PAST HOBO'S USED TO JUNGLE ON THE LITTLE WICHITA RIVER, THAT IS NOT THE CASE NOW, WITH SO MUCH INDUSTRY HAVING LEFT TOWN FOR DALLAS/Ft. WORTH, THE TOWN IS TRYING TO REINVENTED ITSELF. THE LITTLE WICHITA IS NOW THE LOCATION OF A RIVER WALK, A REFLECTION OF THE RIVER WALK IN SAN ANTONIO, SO THAT HAS LEFT THE ABANDONED WHITE FLOUR MILL ADJOINING THE B.N. YARD, SOMETIMES A HIDEOUT FOR MARIJUANA SMOKERS, AND LOCAL PROSTITUTES, IT STILL IS A PLACE TO GET OUT OF THE WEATHER.

REINVENTING ITSELF IS NOTHING NEW TO WICHITA FALLS, ORIGINALLY A STOP ON THE CHISHOLM TRAIL, CATTLE AND HORSES USED TO BE THE MAIN INDUSTRY FOR THE TOWN, WITH STOCKYARD'S ON THE NORTH SIDE, A PLACE FOR EASY EMPLOYMENT IF YOU'RE WILLING TO WORK 14-16 HOUR DAYS. FOR MANY YEARS WICHITA FALLS USED TO BE A STOP ON A TRIP NORTH OR SOUTH, A EVENTUAL TRUCK STOP WITH ITS BEGINNINGS AS A CATTLE STOP AND A RAIL HEAD ON THE FORT WORTH & DENVER CITY RAILWAY, THE BIGGEST MANPOWER AVAILABLE DURING ITS EARLY YEARS ALWAYS WAS HOBO'S, WORKING TO BUILD THE HIGHWAYS THAT RAN THROUGH TOWN. DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF CALVIN COOLIDGE THE U.S. HIGHWAY SYSTEM WAS BORN, THE LAS VEGAS HIGHWAY (U.S. HIGHWAY 287 FROM Ft. WORTH TO LAS VEGAS NEW MEXICO) AND THE JACKSBORO HIGHWAY (U.S. HIGHWAY 281 RUNNING FROM WICHITA KANSAS TO JACKSBORO TEXAS,

A LAWLESS, CUT THROAT TOWN) FURTHER ESTABLISHED WICHITA FALLS AS A TRUCK STOP. AND THE F.W.& D.C. RAILWAY STILL BROUGHT HOBO'S TO THE AREA, BRINGING WITH THEM THE ETHNIC COMPLEXITIES OF THEIR HOME COUNTRIES TO FURTHER BLEND INTO THE HISTORY OF THIS LOCALE. LATER THE OIL INDUSTRY WAS THE MAINSTAY FOR THIS TRUCK STOP/CITY, AND THE U.S. AIR FORCE HAS A BASE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TOWN, MANY SOLDIERS WOULD TRAIN HERE TO BE SENT TO AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ, INCLUDING SEVERAL SAUDI ARABIAN PILOTS. FEWER HOBO'S WOULD RIDE THE RAILS FAVORING MORE TO DRIVE THE SAME HIGHWAYS THEY HELPED BUILD, IN FRONT OF THE CAPRI MOTEL, AN EARLY ESTABLISHED HOUSING WHERE HIGHWAY EMPLOYEES WOULD CALL A TEMPORARY HOME THERE IS A MONUMENT DEDICATED TO THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT U.S. HIGHWAY 287. THE CAPRI NOW IS A "HOOKER MOTEL" BUT AT THE EDGE OF THE PARKING LOT IS A DEDICATION MARKER COMMEMORATING THOSE WHO BUILT THESE HIGHWAYS, AT THE BASE IS A CONCRETE FOUNDATION WITH NAMES, AND MONIKERS INSCRIBED. WITH REAL GIVEN NAMES, OR ROAD NAMES THESE HOBO'S WANTED TO LEAVE AS EVIDENCE THAT THEY WERE PRESENT TO BUILD SOMETHING USEFUL, AS OPPOSED TO THE PREJUDICED IDEA THAT THEY WERE "NE'RE DO WELL'S," LEAVING NOTHING USEFUL BEHIND WHEREVER THEY WENT. A TRADITION SIMILAR TO THAT OF W.W. 2 MILITARY MEN WHO WOULD MAINTAIN EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES LEAVING BEHIND A GRAFFITI DRAWING TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES - KILROY WAS HERE - ONCE AGAIN A TRADITION OR CULTURE OF A PEOPLE LONG THOUGHT TO BE CRIMINALS, OR VANDALS, REALLY? HOW MANY OF YOU READING THIS BOOK HAVE HAD THE SAME PREJUDICED, PRECONCEIVED JUDGING DIRECTED AT YOU BECAUSE OF WHERE YOU WERE BORN, OR YOUR SOCIAL STANDING?, IS THIS WHAT WE AS AMERICANS ARE LEFT TO DIRECTING TOWARDS PEOPLE WHO ARE OF A LOWER SOCIAL STANDING THAN OURSELVES?, AND WHY IS IT SUCH A SURPRISE WHEN IT IS REDIRECTED TOWARDS US?

MOST OF MY TIME IN WICHITA FALLS (ALSO CALLED WICHITITTY CITY BY HOBO'S) WAS SPENT WORKING AT NATIONAL LINEN EXTRACATING ALL MANNER OF DISGUSTING STAINS FROM HOTEL AND HOSPITAL BED SHEETS, AND "JUNGLING" AT THE SPLIT, A "Y" SHAPED SECTION OF REALESTATE. IT WAS THE LOCATION OF THE YARD OFFICE OF THE MKT RAILROAD THAT ORIGINALLY HAD TALL TREES WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF SHADE, IT HAS SINCE BECOME A PRIVATE HOME, THE OWNER CUT DOWN ALL THE TREES NOT REALIZING THIS WOULD MAKE THE LOCATION "HOTTER THAN A 2 DOLLAR PISTOL," (I'M SORRY I USE A TERMINOLOGY THAT IS FOREIGN TO YOU, MY 1ST BOOK CONTAINED A

GLOSSARY, I WISHED TO AVOID DOING THIS IN THIS BOOK) THEN THEY PLANTED SAPLINGS TO CORRECT THEIR MISTAKE. BUT NOW IT'LL TAKE 20-30 YEARS FOR THE TREES TO GET TALL ENOUGH TO BRING THE SAME AMOUNT OF SHADE BACK, SOME PEOPLE ARE JUST PLAIN STUPID!

CHAPTER 6

MANY HAVE USED THIS LOCATION TO CAMP AT WHILE WAITING TO RIDE TO A NEW CITY TO PURSUE THEIR AIMS OF EMPLOYMENT, ADVENTURE, OR ENTERTAINMENT, THEN WHEN THE TRAIN PULLS OUT THEY TRY TO GET A RIDE "ON THE FLY" (MEANING THEY TRY TO MOUNT THE TRAIN WHILE IT'S MOVING) KIND OF STUPID IF YOU ASK ME BUT IF THESE FOLKS DON'T CARE IF THEY GET THEIR LEGS CUT OFF BY A STEEL UNFORGIVING BEAST THEN WHO AM I TO STAND IN THEIR WAY, AND KEEP THEM FROM USING A FREIGHT TRAIN AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR GOLDS GYM. LEAVING WICITATITTY CITY (THOUGHT I'D USE THAT NAME NOW TO KEEP YOU ON YOUR FEET) THE TRAIN PASSES THROUGH MEMPHIS TEXAS WHERE COTTON IS GROWN AND HARVESTED, THIS IS ANOTHER PLACE I WORKED AT, DURING THE TIME I WAS 15 I STOPPED HERE TO PACKAGE COTTON SEED. OF

BOXCAR THAT SHIPPED IN AND BECAUSE COTTONSEED CLOTHES AND IT WHEN IT RUBS ON ITCHY, LIKE YOU POISON IVY. NOT BAD HOURS, HOT LOTS OF SWEATING, WELL, AND YOU CAN OUT OF TOWN EASILY



COURSE I RODE IN ON A COTTONSEED WAS THAT'S A PROBLEM RESIDUE GETS IN YOUR FEELS LIKE FIBERGLASS YOU, FU#\$%&@ING ROLLED IN A FIELD OF WORK, KIND OF LONG TEMPERATURES, AND BUT IT PAYS REALLY CATCH A TRAIN IN AND BECAUSE B.N.S.F.

SETS OFF CARS HERE TO BE FILLED WITH COTTONSEED AS WELL AS COTTON. HOWEVER MEMPHIS TEXAS IS FLAT, TREELESS, AND (ONCE AGAIN) "HOTTER THAN A 2 DOLLAR PISTOL," I SAY THIS FOR READERS WHO THINK THEY'RE GOING TO TRAVEL THERE AND TRY TO DISPROVE ME! AAAAAAAHH, THE FOLKS WHO READ BOOKS AND TRY TO "CALL WRITERS ON THEIR BULLSHIT" (SO TO SPEAK), I'D LIKE TO MEET THESE "FUMERS" AND TAKE THEM OUT ON A FREIGHT TRAIN RIDE, TAKING THEM TO THE LOCATION OF WHERE THE INCIDENT, OR STORY I TOLD WAS LOCATED, I ENJOY PROVING THEM WRONG WITH AN "IN YOUR FACE" ATTITUDE, AND THEN JUST FOR FUN "RUB THEIR NOSE IN IT."

BUT BACK TO MY TRAVELS ON THIS FIRST SOLO RIDE, AND ENOUGH OF MY GRIPING ABOUT MISCONCEPTIONS FOR NOW, AFTER A CREW CHANGE I BOARDED A NEW TRAIN HEADED OUT FOR ELECTRA TEXAS, 23 MILES WEST OF "WICITATITTY CITY," THE LOCATION OF A TEXAS ELECTRIC GAS POWERED STATION. ORIGINALLY IT STARTED OUT WITH A STATIONARY STEAM ENGINE FIRED BY COAL, BUT AT THE TIME COAL WAS NOT AS EASILY DELIVERED AS IT IS NOW, SO ONE DAY, WHEN THE ENGINE SHUTDOWN DUE TO EXHAUSTING THE SUPPLY OF COAL AN ENTERPRISING HOBO EMPLOYEE WENT INTO THE SCRUB WOODS AND CUT DOWN MESQUITE TREES AND HAULED THEM BACK TO THE STEAM ENGINE. USING THE MESQUITE (ALSO CALLED POOR MAN'S COAL) HE FIRED UP THE STEAM ENGINE QUICKLY AND BROUGHT THE POWER STATION BACK ON LINE, AFTER 10 YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT THE HOBO BOUGHT 20,000 ACRES OF MESQUITE GROWING LANDS AND STARTED THE FIRST TEXAS MESQUITE BAR-B-QUE COMPANY. THE HOBO DIDN'T USE A ROAD NAME, JUST HIS REAL NAME, BILL MILLER, AND THUS STARTED THE FIRST BILL MILLER'S BARBQUE RESTRAUNT WHICH NOW HAS RESTRAUNT'S ALL OVER TEXAS, AND PARTS OF OKLAHOMA, AND NEW MEXICO, NOT THE THIEVES THAT AUTHORITIES TRY TO GET PEOPLE INDOCTRINATED TO BELIEVE HOBO'S ARE! THEN FURTHER TO THE WEST WE COME TO QUANNAH, ANOTHER TOWN THAT HAS A CONNECTION WITH B.N.S.F. (OF COURSE AT THAT TIME IT WAS THE FRISCO), THE TOWN WAS NAMED AFTER ITS MOST FAMOUS RESIDENT, THE LAST COMMANCHE CHIEF - QUANNAH PARKER. HE SETTLED IN THE AREA AFTER MAKING A PEACE TREATY WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND PURCHASED PROPERTY FOR HIS FAMILY, AS WELL AS ACROSS MULTIPLE COUNTIES TO ESTABLISH A "PAPER RAILROAD" CALLED THE QUANNAH ACME & PACIFIC. IT ALLOWED THE "FRISCO" RAILROAD TO ATTEMPT THE FEAT OF DOING LIKE IT INTENDED, LAYING RAILS TO THE PACIFIC. THE LOCOMOTIVES AND CABOOSE'S WERE ALL FRISCO EQUIPMENT, BUT QUANNAH ONLY HIRED HOBO'S, IN THE TEXAS HISTORY RECORDS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS IN AUSTIN,

QUANNAH STATES - "THEY HAVE A PROPER RESPECT FOR THE LAND, THEY WORK LESS FOR MONEY AND MORE FOR FISHING AND HUNTING RIGHTS, THEIR TRADITIONS ARE A PARALLEL TO THE COMMANCHE, THEY ARE TRULY GOOD MEN!" WELL QUANNAH LIVED LIKE A HOBO IN HIS OWN WAY, HE WOULD BE THE BEST JUDGE OF WHO IS MORE TRUSTWORTHY THAN OUR GOVERNMENT!, BUT GOOD MEN?, I DON'T THINK QUANNAH PARKER KNEW HOW HOBO'S GOT THAT TITLE.

THE TITLE HOBO HAS ITS ORIGINS IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT AREAS OF HISTORY, ORIGINALLY THE TITLE HOBO WAS BELIEVED TO DERIVE FROM SOLDIERS AND SOME MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AGENTS RETURNING FROM THE CIVIL WAR (ONCE AGAIN: NOTHING CIVIL ABOUT WAR), HITCHING A RIDE ON A FREIGHT TRAIN TO FIND OUT IF THEIR HOME STILL EXISTED, THUS THEY WERE HOMEWARD BOUND, BUT UPON FINDING HOME NO LONGER EXISTED THEY GATHERED UP IMPLEMENTS SUCH AS HOE'S TO USE IN THE WORKING OF EMPLOYMENT ON FARMS AND IN GARDENS, AND THUS THEY WERE CALLED HOE BOYS, THIS FALLACY HAS BEEN REPEATED MANY TIMES, WHEN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR WAS OVER SEVERE REBUILDING WAS GOING ON. ITEMS SUCH AS HOE'S WERE COLD FORGED AND WERE EXPENSIVE TO MAKE, LET ALONE PURCHASE, MANY IMPLEMENTS HAD SHORT HANDLES. WHEN WORKING USING AN IMPLEMENT WITH A SHORT HANDLE YOU HAVE TO BEND OVER PUTTING A STRAIN ON THE MUSCLES, NERVES, AND BONES OF YOUR UPPER BACK AND IT WILL ACHE AS IF IT WAS BEING RUN OVER. (BY WHAT YOU MIGHT ASK?, USE YOUR IMAGINATION IF YOU HAVE ONE!) ADD TO THAT HOBO'S OF THAT TIME COULDN'T AFFORD A \$15.00 HOE WHEN WAGES WERE 40-50 CENTS A DAY, WHAT HOBO'S CARRIED, AND WHAT IS DEPICTED IN POLITICAL CARTOONS WAS A LONG LIGHTWEIGHT STICK TO INSERT INTO THE IMPLEMENT TO COMPLETE A FULL DAYS WORK, FROM SUN UP TO SUN DOWN. HOE'S, PICKS, AND AXES WERE SOLD WITH SHORT HANDLES AND (AS I PREVIOUSLY SAID) WOULD MAKE YOUR BACK HURT HORRIBLY, WHICH EXPLAINS THE PHRASE BACK BREAKING WORK. ANOTHER EXPLANATION OF THE ORIGINS OF THE TITLE HOBO COMES FROM NEW YORK CITY, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE BOWERY, AND THE INTERSECTION OF HOUSTON AND BOWERY STREETS. THIS PART OF NEW YORK CITY WAS A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT THE POLICE DID NOT PATROL, IT WAS A LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT OFFICES AND HOUSES OF ILL REPUTE WHERE HOBO'S DID WORK AND LIVED INEXPENSIVELY WITH THEIR PROSTITUTE GIRLFRIENDS. MANY OF THESE COUPLES RETIRED FROM HOBOING AND PROSTITUTION TO BECOME FAMILIES, AND THE UPPER CRUST OF NEW YORK SOCIETY, THE PUBLIC NOT KNOWING THEIR ORIGINAL BEGINNINGS. ANOTHER

EXPLANATION IS THE TITLE WAS COINED BY A CATHOLIC PRIEST IN CHICAGO, THE PRIEST COULD DISCERN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE MEN WHO WANTED TO BUM FOR THEIR DINNER AND THOSE MEN WHO WANTED TO WORK, THE PRIEST CALLED THE MEN WHO WANTED TO WORK FOR THEIR DINNER HOMO BONUS, THE TERM HOMO BONUS IS A LATIN PHRASE MEANING GOOD MAN. THERE ARE OTHER EXPLANATIONS OF THIS TITLE, OR TERM, I'M SURE PEOPLE KNOW WHERE THE EXPLANATIONS ARE CATALOGUED, NOT THE INFORMATION THAT THE POLICE, OR THE F.B.I. WANTS YOU TO UNDERSTAND, OR EVEN HAVE ACCESS TO, THEY WOULD RATHER HAVE YOU BELIEVE THEIR BRAIN WASHING, ISN'T THAT BIZZARE?

AFTER LEAVING QUANNAH I ROLLED THE PLAINS OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE, TO ME THIS IS THE TRUE WEST, OR AT LEAST THE EDGE OF IT, DURING THE 1960's FAMOUS FILM DIRECTOR JOHN FORD FILMED 200 WESTERN MOVIES WITH GRAND PANORAMIC BACKDROPS. THE GRAND TETONS, THE SUPERSTITIONS, THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, YOSEMITE, REDLANDS CANYON, DEATH VALLEY, BUT ALSO PALO DURO CANYON, WHICH IS EAST OF AMARILLO, AND FROM DALHART NORTH AND WEST, THE GREAT DESERT PLAINS OF THE WEST, INCLUDING AMARILLO. THIS CITY WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE CHAPMAN FAMILY WHICH OWNED 2 HUGE RANCHES, THE NAMESAKE CHAPMAN RANCH WHICH STRETCHED FROM AMARILLO TEXAS NORTH TO PUEBLO COLORADO, AND THE X.I.T. WHICH STRETCHED FROM AMARILLO WEST TO LAS VEGAS NEW MEXICO. IN FACT AT TUCUMCARI THE TRAIN STATION STILL STANDS WHICH HAS BEEN USED AS A PROP FOR MOVIES AND T.V. SHOWS FROM THE VIGINIAN AND THE BIG VALLEY TO THE GAMBLER AND MAVERICK (THE MODERN VERSION)! ON THE WEST SIDE OF AMARILLO ARE BRICK OVENS WHICH WERE OWNED BY THE CHAPMAN FAMILY, AT ONE TIME THEY WERE THE MAJOR 2ND INDUSTRY IN TOWN, MANUFACTURING BRICKS TO BUILD HOUSES AND STREETS IN AMARILLO, AS WELL AS THE PICTURESQUE SANTA FE TRAIN STATION WHICH HAS ALSO APPEARED IN MOVIES FROM RIO BRAVO TO J.F.K THE FORT WORTH ZEPHYR ON THE FORT WORTH AND DENVER CITY RAILWAY WOULD SERVICE THROUGH THE CITY, STOPPING AT THE ROCK ISLAND STATION AND THEN SWITCHING BACK TO THE F.W.& D.C.

HOBO - FAST FREDDY, WAS NOTORIOUS FOR RIDING THIS EXPRESS, RIDING IN THE BATTERY BOX, FREDDY WOULD FREQUENT AMARILLO, AND WORKED AT THE CHAPMAN BRICK WORKS ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE CITY, EVENTUALLY FAST FREDDY CAME TO THE CITY TO STAY. WORKING THE CHAPMAN BRICK

WORKS STEADY FROM 6:00 AM TO 6:00 PM EVERY DAY EXCEPT SUNDAY, NORMALLY HE WOULD "JUNGLE OUT" BUT CAME ACROSS AN ABANDONED HOUSE ONE DAY AND BEGAN RENOVATING IT, WITH WIRE HE BOUGHT OFF THE SAME SCRAP METAL YARD HE USED TO TAKE COPPER TO WHEN HE WOULD GO "JUNKING." FREDDY REBUILT THE WALLS, EXTERIOR, CHIMNEY, STAIRS, PORCH, WINDOWS, AND INTERIORS WITH SALVAGED LUMBER AND SHEETROCK, THEN REWIRED THE HOUSE WITH SALVAGED WIRE WHICH PASSED INSPECTION FOR HABITATION. HE EVENTUALLY FINISHED THE HOUSE WHICH SAT NEXT TO THE B.N. RAILROAD MAINLINE, FREQUENTLY HE WOULD FIND HOBO'S CAMPED IN HIS YARD AFTER A DAYS WORK, WALKING ACROSS THE MAINLINE HOME.

THE PLACE WAS A WELCOME LOCATION TO HEAD FOR AFTER A LONG RIDE TO THE CITY. FREDDY WOULD BE COOKING A BIG POT OF HOBO STEW, A CAMPFIRE WOULD ALWAYS BE BURNING, ALL HOBO'S WERE WELCOME, IT WAS PRIVATE PROPERTY. NEITHER THE RAILROAD NOR THE CITY POLICE COULD BOTHER ANYBODY BECAUSE THEY WERE INVITED GUESTS, AND THE COUNTY SHERIFF DIDN'T WANT TO COME OUT AND BE BOTHERED WITH WHAT MIGHT CONSTITUTE A HOBO GANG, AT AGE 13 I KNEW THAT FAST FREDDY WAS STILL ALIVE, AND I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING HIM, AS OPPOSED TO LISTENING TO EXAGGERATED STORIES OF HIS JOURNEYS AND EXPLOITS FROM OTHER HOBO'S. FREDDY HAD A "FRIENDLY FIRE" BURNING IN HIS FRONT YARD AND A POT OF HOBO STEW BUBBLING AND SIMMERING, AS BUZZ POTTER USED TO SAY "THAT'S MADE FROM BONES AND HANDOUTS, AND MAYBE A SPUD OR 2," I ALREADY HAD THE TOBACCO AND BREW.

JUNGLE RULES SAY THIS IS WHAT IS EXPECTED!, MOST FOLKS HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT JUNGLE ETIQUETTE, THEY HARDLY SHOW ETIQUETTE IN THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY, WHEN APPROACHING A JUNGLE OR CAMPFIRE YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE APPROACHING A HOME, PRIMITIVE, BUT STILL A HOME, AND WITH ANY HOME YOU TREAT THIS AS IF YOU NEED PERMISSION TO ENTER OR BE INVITED INSIDE. SO WHAT DO YOU DO HERE?, DISRESPECT THE OWNERS AND BARGE IN AS IF YOU HAVE A RIGHT?, OR DO YOU RING THE DOORBELL, OR KNOCK AND ASK FOR PERMISSION TO COME INSIDE?, OR EVEN BE INVITED IN?, WELL WHEN I APPROACH A JUNGLE OR CAMPFIRE I ASK IF I CAN COME INSIDE. R-E-S-P-E-C-T, REMEMBER THE ADVICE OF MS. ARETHA FRANKLIN, THIS IS WHAT I DID THAT DAY, IT'S 813 MILES FROM LAMPASSAS TO AMARILLO, RIDING 4 FILTHY, RATTLING FREIGHT TRAINS, AND CARS. STOPPING TO REST IS DESIRABLE, BUT TO ACTUALLY BE INVITED INTO

SOMEONE'S HOME, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE PERSON DIDN'T KNOW YOU FROM ADAM (THIS IS A HOBO'S WAY OF SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW ME IN A LOFTY STYLE) THAT IS A BLESSING FROM GOD!

FAST FREDDY WELCOMED ME AS IF I WAS A LONG LOST RELATIVE, AND I MAY HAVE BEEN, AND WHEN I ASKED HIM ABOUT DAYS HE SPENT AS A YOUNGER MAN HE SPUN A TALE THAT TOOK HIM 11 DAYS TO TELL, AND WITH THAT 1 QUESTION I SAT AND LISTENED, ENTHRALLED, TO INFORMATION THAT ONLY COMES WITH TIME AND AGE. FROM FREDDY'S POINT OF VIEW WE (AS HAS BEEN SAID BY MANY) ALL SPEND A LIFETIME IN A SCHOOL, A UNIVERSITY WE ATTENDED ALL OUR DAYS, THE COLLEGE OF HARD KNOCKS, AND WE DON'T GRADUATE UNTIL WE CATCH THE WESTBOUND. FREDDY TOLD ME HE WAS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH MY MOTHER AS WELL AS MY FATHER, HE STATED THAT THE 2 OF THEM WERE ATTENDING THE CHEYENNE WYOMING FRONTIER DAYS, AND HAD TRAVELED INTO THE CITY ON THE BURLINGTON ROUTE (AS IT WAS CALLED AT THAT TIME) AND THE 3 OF THEM WERE WALKING "THE STEM" (THIS REFERS TO THE MAIN THOROUGHFARE, OR STREET). THEY HAD PUT ON THEIR CLEANEST DIRTY CLOTHES AND PASSED BY A BOOTH OFFERING \$100 TO ANYONE WHO COULD SHOOT 10 OBJECTS WITH ONLY 10 SHOTS, MY FATHER (CONNER) STEPPED UP, TOOK A RIFLE IN HAND, AND COMPLETED ALL 10 SHOTS. INCLUDING SHOOTING OUT THE TAPE, WIRES, AND ADHESIVES HOLDING THE OBJECTS IN PLACE AT THIS "JOINT," THE OBJECT OF THE ATTRACTION IS FOR THE "MARK" TO PAY A \$10 FEE BEFORE SHOOTING.

ONE OUT OF EVERY 100 SHOOTERS WOULD WIN, THIS IS WHAT WOULD ATTRACT BUSINESS, AND IS HOW THEY WOULD MAKE THEIR MONEY! BUT MY FATHER DID THE IMPOSSIBLE, AND/OR IMPROBABLE, HE THEN TOLD FREDDY THAT HE LEARNED SHOOTING AS A CHILD, HIS FATHER HAD TAUGHT HIM, IN HIS HOMETOWN OF DUNBLANE SCOTLAND, HIS FATHER AND ALL HIS FAMILY WERE AND STILL ARE MEMBERS OF THE I.R.A.! (TO THIS DAY CONSIDERED A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, REGARDLESS OF THEIR POLITICAL ARM, SEIN FEINN THAT IS NOW SITTING IN THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT AS THEIR REPRESENTATIVES) THIS I LEARNED AT AGE 32, WHEN I WAS RESEARCHING MY FATHER AND HIS ORIGINS, I HAD ONLY THE REFERENCE OF INFORMATION GAINED FROM MY MOTHEWAS MORE ANECDOTAL THAN FACTUAL.

CHAPTER 7

**AT THE TIME I
BE INFORMED
HIS TRAVELS, AND
ALSO HIS ORIGINS
FOR COMING TO
AND LEAVING HIS
AND WHEN I
HISTORY BEFORE
UNITED STATES I
EXPERIENCED A
WITH THE WHOLE
AS IRELAND HAD
THE POTATO
THE UNITED
ALLEVIATE THE
WAS HAPPENING
FATHER LEFT HIS
TO THE UNITED
FOR FINANCIAL
AS PHYSICAL SURVIVAL. FREDDY ALSO TOLD ME OF THE DAYS THAT MOM AND**



**FELT THE NEED TO
ABOUT NOT ONLY
ACTIVITIES, BUT
AND THE REASON
THE UNITED STATES
HOME COUNTRY.
RESEARCHED HIS
COMING TO THE
FOUND HE
FAMINE ALONG
OF SCOTLAND, JUST
EXPERIENCED WITH
FAMINE. SEEING
STATES COULD
STARVATION THAT
IN SCOTLAND MY
HOME TO TRAVEL
STATES, AS MUCH
REASONS AS WELL**

CONNER WOULD BE WORKING WHILE STOPPED IN A TOWN OR CITY AND MET SOMEONE FROM THE TOWN, AFTER HEARING CONNER SPEAK WITH A SCOTTISH ACCENT, THE "TOWNIE" WOULD POSE A QUESTION IN AN INSULTING MANNER. SAYING "WHERE'ER YOU FROM BOY?," FREDDY RELATED THAT BOTH HE AND CONNER BRISTLED AT THIS INSULTING QUESTION BECAUSE ANYONE WHO HAS TAKEN UP THIS STATION OF ADULTHOOD. GIVING UP ALL CONVENIENCES OF THE MODERN LIFE, WHO IS WILLING TO FACE THE PLEASURES, AND PROBLEMS IN THIS LIFE, AND IS READY TO FACE THE DANGERS WITHOUT SUPPORT OF THE POLICE OR ANY AUTHORITY OF THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY CAN AND SHOULD NEVER BE CALLED A BOY!

THIS SIMPLE WORD CALLS UP ALL MANNER OF DERISION IN TREATMENT OVER PEOPLE WHO HAVE A NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT, AND IN SO SECURING SAID EMPLOYMENT ARE TREATED "LESS THAN HUMAN" BY PEOPLE WHO FEEL IT IS THEIR RIGHT TO DO SO. HOBO'S TREAT THIS ATTITUDE, AND ACTIVITY WITH RESISTANCE, RETURNING THE SAME ATTITUDE AND TREATMENT TOWARD THOSE WHO ORIGINALLY GIVE IT, THIS GOES BACK TO THE OLD QUOTE "GETTING BACK YOUR OWN." THIS IS BUT ONE ASPECT OF THE PROTECTIVE NATURE BY HOBO'S TO ENSURE THIS TREATMENT IS NEVER AGAIN DIRECTED TOWARDS THEIR PEOPLE, MORALS, TRADITION OF FAMILY, SELF-DETERMINATION, THIS IS WHAT GUIDES THE HOBO FAMILY. THIS IS NOT WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM PEOPLE WHO MOVE, AND TRAVEL ON FREIGHT TRAINS, AND PERSONALLY CREATED AND DEMOCRATICALLY VOTED UPON LAWS, IS THIS NOT TRADITION FOR A TRULY CIVILIZED PEOPLE? AND WHY SHOULD THIS NATION OF RAIL RIDING HOBO'S NOT HAVE THIS STYLE OF LIFE?, THIS ASPECT OF OUR NATION IS NEVER CONSIDERED BY AUTHORITIES OF THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY!

PREACHY AREN'T I?, STILL I FEEL THE NEED TO ADMONISH WHOMEVER I MEET WHO HAS THE IDEA THAT THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO TREAT THE LESSER OF SOCIETY AS IF THEY'RE A DOG TO KICK, AND HAVING BEEN TREATED THAT WAY, AND REFUSING TO NEVER BE TREATED THAT WAY AGAIN I RETURN THE ATTITUDE TO MAKE THE PERSECUTER FEEL LIKE SH#\$%&@T! LESSONS LEARNED ON-THE-ROAD, OR AROUND THE JUNGLE FIRE I APPLY DAILY, LIKE NOT TO WASTE ANYTHING, THIS DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE BECOME A HOARDER, BUT CLASS ITEMS SUCH AS BLUEJEANS THAT LAST A LONG TIME ARE OFTEN VALUED BECAUSE THEY CAN BE COUNTED ON. LIKE THE GERBER POCKET TOOL I CARRY, THE GERBER HAS A MULTITUDE OF USES AT WORK, AND AT HOME, BESIDES 200,000 NAVY SEAL'S AND SPECIAL FORCES "A" AND "B" TEAMS

WHO USE THEM DAILY CAN'T BE WRONG! OR REDWING BOOTS, THEY'RE USED BY LOGGERS, FIREMEN, AS WELL AS POLICE, STATE TROOPERS AND HOBO'S, HEAVY LEATHER SOLES OF THICK NEOPRENE, THEY ARE STURDY, PUNCTURE PROOF, WATERPROOF, HAVE THE BEST GRIP IN WET CONDITIONS, GIVE THE BEST ANKLE SUPPORT, FOOT ARCH SUPPORT. TRUE REDWING'S ARE EXPENSIVE BUT WORTH THE AMOUNT OF MONEY IT COSTS TO PURCHASE THEM, A HUMAN SPENDS 80% OF THEIR LIFE ON THEIR FEET, BETTER TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR FEET, RATHER THAN TO LOSE ALL USE BECAUSE OF YOUR NEGLIGENCE.

ALSO I LEARNED THE ART OF MAKING HOBO STEW, NOW THIS IS A SPECIFIC RECIPE, NOT AS MANY COMEDIANS OR PEOPLE LIKE HOBO QUEEN GYPSY MOON HAVE INTIMATED THAT YOU ADD ALL MANNER OF VEGETABLES, AND MEAT, SALT, AND PEPPER, THEN BOIL IT AND HOPE SOMETHING COMES OUT EATABLE, AND NOT SCORCHED.

HER RECIPE WAS SEMI POETICAL:

**"TAKE WHAT YOU'VE GOT,
IN PUT IT IN A POT,
HEAT IT 'TILL IT'S HOT,**

**AND THEY'LL
NOT."**

**THERE ARE
SIZED CUTS
CHICKEN,
AND
TURTLE
POTATOES,
CARROTS,
PEPPERS,
SALT,
LEMON
BUTTERCUP
AND**



EAT IT OR

**SPECIFIC
OF BEEF,
AND PORK,
SOMETIMES
ADDED TO
CABBAGE,
BELL
GARLIC,
PLANTAIN,
CLOVER,
PETALS,
CORNMEAL.**

THIS LAST INGREDIENT IS THE THICKENER, AS OPPOSED TO USING CORN STARCH, CORN MEAL WILL STAY DRY WHEN CARRIED IN YOUR BACKPACK, WHERE AS CORN STARCH WILL CAKE SOLID, AND IS A USELESS BRICK AFTER A COUPLE OF MILES, EVERYTHING IS SLOWLY SIMMERED OVER A WOOD FIRE. NOT BOILED AS CITIZENS ERONIOUSLY BELIEVE, YES, WOOD CAN BE EASILY DISTRIBUTED, AND MANAGED TO GIVE AN EVEN STEADY HEAT, GRANTED IT TAKES LONGER TO COOK, BUT THE END RESULT IS THE FINEST FOOD TO BE DINED UPON!

CHAPTER 8

AND ANOTHER LESSON LEARNED IS THAT OF CARRYING EXTRA CLOTHES WITH YOU, CLEAN CLOTHES TO WEAR WHEN VENTURING INTO A TOWN SO AS TO BLEND IN WITH THE "LOCALS" AND NOT "STICK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB" BESIDES BEING CLEAN AND WEARING CLEAN CLOTHES IS PREFERABLE TO BEING DIRTY AND STINKING LIKE A "HOMEGUARD" (THIS IS A PERSON WHO FOUND A TOWN THAT HAS MANY BENEFITS FOR BUMS THAT DON'T REQUIRE ANY WORK). AS I HUNG AROUND FREDDY'S PROPERTY IN AMARILLO I BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT A HOBO'S HOME IS MORE LIKE AN AIRPORT, WITH OTHER HOBO'S COMING IN AND LEAVING THE PROPERTY AT ALL HOURS OF THE DAY OR NIGHT, CALLING THEMSELVES "STREAMLINERS" AND "ROAD MEN" THEIR LIFE IS TO ALWAYS HEAD DOWN THE ROAD MAKING THAT NEXT DAY AT EITHER THE SALVATION ARMY HOMELESS SHELTER, OR RESCUE MISSION. IT'S A WASTE OF LIFE TO ME, AND I'D RATHER STOP AT A HOBO'S PROPERTY, MORE WELCOMING TO BE AMONG HOBO'S WHO KNOW YOUR LIFE AND ALL IT ENTAILS, STOPPING AT A SAFE LOCATION, EASIER TO "CATCH OUT" FROM, A CONTINUOUS REVOLVING DOOR. IT WAS NOW THAT I ASKED AND RECEIVED INFORMATION ON

TRAVELING FURTHER DOWN THE LINE, I WAS TOLD ABOUT ROCK ISLAND RED, A ROCK ISLAND ENGINEER WHO ALSO RAN A MISSION OUT OF A HOUSE IN DALHART. HE WOULD PREFER TO HOUSE HOBO'S OVERNIGHT, FEEDING THEM A BOWL OF BEANS, AND GIVING THEM WORK PROSPECTS, OR TRAIN INFORMATION, ONE THING NOT NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH RAILROADERS, ROCK ISLAND RED WAS A RESPITE IN A TOWN THAT WAS ANTI-HOBO. LEAVING DALHART WE TRAVEL UP TO TEXLINE WHICH WAS A CREW CHANGE, WITH A 3 STALL ENGINE HOUSE, A HOTEL, AND A LARGE STOCKYARD OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE X.I.T. RANCH, IF YOU DON'T MIND SMELLING COW SHIT YOU CAN PICK UP SHORT TERM WORK HERE 3-4 TIMES A YEAR.

OTHERWISE IT'S TIME TO HEAD FOR PUEBLO COLORADO, SO SITTING NEXT TO A VACANT RAIL LINE YOU LISTEN TO THE RAILS SING, NOT A CLIKETY-CLACK, BUT A WIRE LIKE STRUMING, NOT TO MAKE MUSIC, BUT TO HEAR THE DENSITY OF THE METAL, NEXT YOU'LL HEAR THE THROATY SOUND OF A DIESEL ENGINE. WHINING FROM THE TURBOCHARGERS, AND SQUEAL OF THE WHEELS, PLUS THE ACRID BURNT OZONE SMELL WHEN THE BRAKES ARE APPLIED TO STOP THE 120 CAR BEAST. AND OLDTIME HOBO'S SAID ONLY STEAM ENGINES HAD A PERSONALITY, BUT I KNOW THAT DIESEL TRAINS HAVE A SEPARATE PERSONALITY, THE THRUMMING OF THE ENGINE IS ITS HEARTBEATS AS IT LAYS IDLE, THE WHINE OF THE TURBOCHARGERS ARE ITS VOICE AS IF REVING UP TO GO SCREAMING DOWN THE LINE. THEN, WHEN IT LEAVES AS IF GOD HIMSELF GAVE THE ORDER TO MOVE, THIS GREAT STEEL BEAST SCREAMS AWAY SIMILAR TO A DRAGON TRYING TO OUTFRAN THE DEVIL HIMSELF, WIND BLAZING BY. HOT EXHAUST ITS BREATH AS IF FIRE WOULD BLAST FORTH LIGHTING THE DAY OR NIGHT, YES, I IMAGINE A LOT WHEN RIDING BUT I SEE THIS TRAIN AS A LIVING CREATURE ALLOWING ME TO RIDE IT'S BACK AS IT FLIES OFF FOR A NEW QUEST, AN EVERY DAY ADVENTURE.

AND SO THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES AFTER 2 MONTHS OF CONTRACT WORK AT LEVI STRAUSS, PACKAGING BLUEJEANS FOR SHIPMENT TO STORES AROUND THE COUNTRY, I CAUGHT A FREIGHT TRAIN AFTER THE SUN WENT DOWN, THE NIGHT COOLING WITH FIREFLIES WINKING, AND A LIGHT BREEZE. A TRAIN ROLLED TO A STOP IN FRONT OF FREDDY'S YARD, AS SOON AS IT STOPPED HOBO'S CAME OUT OF THE BRUSH LIKE HUNGRY COYOTE'S TRAILING A WOUNDED BIRD, AND IT SEEMED THAT EVERY "NOOK AND CRANNY" WAS FILLED IMMEDIATELY BY HOBO'S. AS FREDDY TOLD ME I WAITED WHILE THE HOBO'S FILLED EVERY CAR, SOME OF THEM TRIED TO GET ME TO BOARD THE TRAIN WITH THEM BUT RED

FLAGS FLASHED THROUGH MY MIND AT THIS, WHEN I LEFT LAMPASSAS I MADE A DECISION NEVER TO RIDE A TRAIN WITH SOMEONE I DON'T KNOW! SO I WAITED AND LET THIS TRAIN PULL OUT, SEVERAL OF THE HOBO'S CAJOLED ME FOR NOT GETTING ON BOARD BUT I WAS DETERMINED, TOO MANY HOBO'S ON ONE TRAIN WOULD ATTRACT UNWANTED ATTENTION AND I JUST WANTED TO SLIDE OUT. LIKE A SHADOW, A GHOST, A WHISPER OF WIND, AND I HAD UNTIL SUNRISE TO RIDE OUT OF TOWN, THIS WASN'T THE ONLY FREIGHT TRAIN RUNNING THE ENTIRE SYSTEM, ANOTHER WOULD STOP DURING THE NIGHT AND IT WOULD BE MY OWN PRIVATE LIMO.

A MULTIMILLION DOLLAR MOTORHOME CHAUFFEURED BY THE RAILROAD TAKING ME ON MY QUEST, DURING THE NIGHT WE PASSED THE OTHER TRAIN, LO AND BEHOLD IT WAS STOPPED AND EVERY HOBO ON BOARD WAS FACE DOWN IN THE GRAVEL. IT SEEMS RAILROAD POLICE (THE "BULLS") HAD SPOTTED THE LARGE HOST OF DRUNKEN HOBO'S ON BOARD AND ARRESTED THEM, BUT MY TRAIN ROLLED BY AND I WAS CHAUFFEURED UP THROUGH TRINIDAD, TO PUEBLO COLORADO TO SPEND THE NIGHT JUNGLED AT THE CONNECTION OF THE ARKANSAS AND SALT RIVERS. RELAXING WITH 2 LARGE BOTTLES OF OLD ENGLISH 800, AND EATING FRESHLY CAUGHT FISH, WITH THE BUBBLING OF THE 2 RIVERS AS MY MUSIC, WATCHING FIREFLIES, AND STUDYING THE STARS IN A CLEAR BLACK SKY, WHILE A FULL MOON LIT THE JUNGLE WITH ENOUGH LIGHT TO MAKE THE SURROUNDING BUSHES APPEAR AS IF THEY WERE BATHED IN DAYTIME SUNLIGHT. PUEBLO WAS JUST A LAYOVER TOWN, A SPOT TO REST IN BEFORE TRAVELLING FURTHER NORTH, WEST, EAST, OR SOUTH DEPENDING ON THE TRAVELER AND HIS OR HER DIRECTION, ALTHOUGH MINE THAT DAY WAS TO STAY AND DO ABOUT 5 DAYS WASHING AND DETAILING CARS ON USED CAR LOTS. \$50 TO \$70 PER LOT AND VISITING A STORE FOR ROAD FOOD, AND GATHERING INFORMATION BEFORE CATCHING THROUGH THE ROYAL GORGE, AND FURTHER WEST ON THE DIRTY & RAGGED GOING WEST (IN REALITY THE DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN RAILROAD, ALSO KNOWN AS THE RIO GRANDE), ONE OF SEVERAL RAILROADS BUILT BY HOBO'S, THE FIRST BEING THE GREAT NORTHERN!

A STORY TOLD BY UTAH PHILLIPS, SATIRICAL AS IT MIGHT BE, TELLS THE STORY OF HOW THIS RAILROAD WAS BUILT BY IRISH HOBOS, THEY WERE CALLED "GANDY DANCERS," THEY USED A SHOVEL MADE BY THE GANDY SHOVEL COMPANY IN CHICAGO ILLINOIS, EACH MAN WOULD SHOVE A SHOVEL UNDER A RAIL OR TIE, THEN STAND ON THE HANDLE AND BOUNCE UP AND

DOWN, OR "DANCE," THIS WOULD ALLOW GRAVEL TO BE SHOVED UNDERNEATH THE TIES TO LEVEL THE ROADBED. THAT'S WHAT GANDY DANCING IS, LEVELING THE ROADBED SO THE TRAIN DOESN'T FALL OFF AS IT PASSES BY, WHICH IF IT DOES IT'S A REAL DRAG FOR EVERYBODY. ALONG THE WAY THE RIO GRANDE PASSED THROUGH ROYAL GORGE, WITH ITS SQUEALING RAILS BROUGHT ON BY THE FLANGES GRINDING AGAINST THE BALL OF THE RAILS, AS IT ROUNDED SHARP TURNS, ALMOST IN TUNE, LIKE A GRAND CONCERT ECHOING THROUGHOUT THE CANYON AS IT HEADS TOWARDS LEADVILLE JCT. AND FURTHER TO MINTURN TO ADD HELPERS TO CROSS TENNESSEE PASS!



CHAPTER 9

IN MINTURN, ASIDE FROM HELPERS AND THEIR CREWS, THERE IS A CREW MODULAR, SIMILAR TO A HOTEL, BUT ONLY FOR RAILROAD, AND SNOW REMOVAL CREWS, AND ACROSS THE STATE HIGHWAY IS A SKI RESORT WITH CHAIR LIFTS CLIMBING THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN TO TAKE SKIERS TO THE TOP AS IF DELIVERING THEM TO MOUNT ELYMPOUS. AND FOR ME THIS IS ONLY A STOP OVER ON MY WAY TRAVELING TOWARDS EAGLE, THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TENNESSEE PASS LINE AND THE DENVER LINE, THIS RUNS WEST THROUGH BUENA VISTA, RIFLE, GLENWOOD CANYON, AND INTO GRAND JUNCTION. THE SITE OF A REBUILDING YARD FOR TRAINS RUNNING EAST, WITH A TOWN WHERE I USED TO PAINT HOUSES, AND WORK WAREHOUSES BEFORE TRAVELLING FURTHER, BUT MY HOBO LIFE WASN'T ALL TRAVEL AND WORK! I ALSO PANNED FOR GOLD IN THE GUNNISON RIVER, AND CAMPED IN THE SURROUNDING DESERT TO RELAX AND VIEW THE DISTANT MOUNTAINS OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE AWAITING THE RIDE THROUGH REDLANDS CANYON, ANOTHER TOURIST LOCATION WHERE PEOPLE WHITEWATER RAFT THE GUNNISON RIVER TO CONNECT WITH THE COLORADO RIVER. THE REST OF AMERICA PAYS TO SEE THIS, PAYS TO EXPERIENCE IT, BUT I HAVE AND WILL AGAIN SEE AND EXPERIENCE IT FOR FREE, ENVY ME?, YOU OUGHT TO!, BUT I DON'T WISH TO DEGRADE YOU FOR YOUR LIFE AND INTENTIONS OF AESTHETIC PLEASURE, YOUR LIFE IS WHAT YOU WISH TO LIVE AND EXPERIENCE. I AM THE MODERN MARCO POLO, THE ONE WHOSE TRAVELS ARE WRITTEN THAT ALLOWS YOU TO ESCAPE THE DRUGGERY OF WHAT YOU LIVE AND VENTURE TO DISTANT HORIZONS YOU ONLY IMAGINE, MY LIFE LIVED BY ME IS YOUR ESCAPE FROM HOW YOU NOW LIVE, JUST ALLOW ME TO CONTINUE TO LIVE IT, AND WRITE IT IN AN EXPRESSIVE MANNER, THEN YOU CAN READ MY WORDS, AND IMAGINE YOUR ADVENTURE, WHILE SITTING SAFELY AT HOME!

NOT EVERYBODY THAT I MET WHILE TRAVELING THIS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY WAS A PLEASANT PERSON TO BE IN COMPANY WITH, SOME WERE PRETTY SKETCHY, IN FACT NO PLACE IN OUR WORLD CAN YOU FIND A LIFE OR LIFESTYLE THAT IS TRULY SAFE, A SHANGRI-LA SO TO SPEAK. THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY YOU LIVE IN CAN NEITHER PROMISE, NOR FULFILL THIS LIFE FOR YOU, NEITHER CAN MINE, REALITY MUST BE FACED AND ACCEPTED AS A FACT OF LIFE, YOU HAVE POLICE TO PROTECT YOU BUT THEY CANNOT BE EVERYWHERE STOPPING EVERY INSTANCE OF INTIMIDATION, OR VIOLENCE. IN THIS ASPECT YOU USE YOUR PAST EXPERIENCE AS A FRAME OF REFERENCE, AND YOUR COMMON SENSE, IT IS THE SAME IN MY LIFESTYLE, BUT WHERE YOU DO HAVE POLICE, COURTS, AND LAWS TO PROTECT YOU WE HAVE ONLY OURSELVES, SO WE CREATE OUR OWN LAWS AND HAVE OUR OWN SUPERIORS TO POLICE US

(SOMETIMES REFERED TO AS A GOON SQUAD). WE ALSO DEMOCRATICALLY VOTED UPON OUR OWN LAWS, MANY OF THESE COVER COMMON SENSE, AND I WON'T GO INTO ALL OF THEM HERE, BUT SOME POINTS ARE WORTH STATING, ONE LAW SAYS IF A HOBO IS CAUGHT STEALING FROM ANOTHER HOBO HE OR SHE MUST MAKE AMENDS, THEN HE OR SHE IS DRIVEN AWAY FROM THE JUNGLE. GIVEN A SINGLE MATCH TO START THEIR OWN JUNGLE, AND WORD IS SPREAD THAT THIS HOBO IS NO LONGER TRUSTWORTHY AMONG A GROUP AND IS TO BE SHUNNED. THE ISOLATION IS THE PUNISHMENT, BUT IN THE CASE THAT THE OFFENDING HOBO CONTINUES THEIR THIEVERY AGAINST OTHER HOBO'S HE OR SHE IS TO BE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY AND A MORE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT MUST BE ADMINISTERED BY THE GROUP. SOMETIMES GIVING THE OFFENDING HOBO A WAY TO RECEIVE A DISABILITY CHECK FROM THE GOVERNMENT, IN A WAY WE'RE DESTROYING OUR SOCIAL SECURITY, NOT AN INTENDED OUTCOME!

JUSTICE IS HARD TO EXPLAIN TO THE UNINITIATED AND MISINFORMED, MANY PEOPLE ACROSS THIS NATION STILL "LIVE IN THE DARK" BELIEVING WHAT EVER THEY ARE SHOWN ON T.V, OR ON THE INTERNET, BUT UNLESS THERE IS A WRITTEN ACCOUNT, OR BOOK OF INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN INTIMATED. OR THERE IS A DIFINATIVE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS EXPERIENCED EVENTS TO GIVE ORAL EVIDENCE AND SUPPORT WHAT IS SHOWN ON THIS MEDIA THEN THE DISPLAY OF SUCH MEDIA BASED INFORMATION IS NOTHING MORE THAN PROPAGANDA, BRAINWASHING, INDOCTRINATION OF THE PUBLIC. SUCH INDOCTRINATION WAS THE BASIS OF THE NAZI'S, COMMUNISTS, OR OTHER PEOPLE WHO WISH TO MAKE MINDLESS SLAVES OF THE GENERAL POPULOUS. THIS IS THE REASON I STARTED WRITING BOOKS ON THIS SUBJECT, MUCH OF WHAT HAS BEEN SHOWN AND DOCUMENTED FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED STATES IS NOTHING MORE THAN PROPAGANDA AND THERE IS A NEED FOR AN ALTERNATE INFORMATION SOURCE FROM SOMEONE WHO KNOWS OTHERWISE.

SOMEONE WHO HAS LIVED IN THE LIFE THAT HAS ERONIOUSLY BEEN DOCUMENTED BY A GOVERNMENT THAT WISHES YOU TO REMAIN UNINFORMED, IN A PHRASE FROM OUR PAST, AND FROM A PROPHETIC BOOK BY AUTHOR GEORGE ORWELL BIG BROTHER IS IN CONTROL, AND BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU! DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BE THOUGHT OF AS MINDLESS SHEEP?, LEMMINGS INDOCTRINATED TO RUN OVER A CLIFF TO YOUR DEMISE?, OR DO YOU WANT ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW FROM A PERSON WHO

KNOWS OTHERWISE BECAUSE HE HAS LIVED IN THIS WORLD THAT HAS BEEN FALSELY ACCUSED?

O.K, YOU ALLOWED ME A "SOAP BOX" BY WHICH TO PREACH, AND GAVE ME TIME TO RANT AND RAVE LIKE A REVIVAL PREACHER, AND I GUESS I SOUNDED LIKE JIMMY SWAGGARD, OR KENNETH COPELAND, NOW LET ME QUIT GIVING YOU AN "EAR BANGING" AND GET BACK TO THE REASON FOR WRITING. BUT BE FOREWARNED: IF I FEEL THE NEED TO DO A MORE COMPLETE "EAR BANGING" I WILL! SO HOW DO I START AGAIN?, I WAS TALKING, OR WRITING AS IT WERE, ABOUT GRAND JUNCTION AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE RIDE THROUGH REDLANDS CANYON AND WAITING BY THE SIDE OF THE RIO GRANDE YARD AT AN IRRIGATION CANAL, ONE THAT USED TO CHANNEL WATER FROM THE COLORADO RIVER TO THE TOWNS MAIN WATER DEPARTMENT, AND TO THE RAILROADS ENGINE HOUSE, IT ALSO WAS A WATER SUPPLY THAT ANY HOBO COULD FILL A WATER JUG FOR LONG DISTANCE TRAVEL, RIVER WATER THAT WAS BASICALLY SNOW MELT. CLEANER THAN BUYING EVIAN, OR PERRIER, YES WE HOBO'S KNOW ABOUT SUCH THINGS, INCLUDING ABOUT HOW TO MAKE BEEF BORVENION, LEMON PEPPER CHICKEN, OR BULGOGI, AND THE BEST TO EAT WHILE DRINKING A 40-50 YEAR OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH IS KIMCHI. BUT AUTHORITIES (PEOPLE WHO TRY TO ACT LIKE THEY ARE INTELLIGENT, BUT IN REALITY HAVE NO REAL IDEA ABOUT AUTHORITY, OR HOW TO ADMINISTER IT) STILL FEEL WE ARE AS: "DUMB AS A BAG OF HAMMERS" - FOOLS!

SO LET ME QUIT PREACHING, RANTING, & RAVING, YOU DIDN'T BUY THIS BOOK TO READ THIS LINE OF IRRITABILITY, AS I RODE OUT OF GRAND JUNCTION INTO REDLANDS CANYON TO VIEW THE FINELY SCULPTED RED & WHITE LAYERED HILLS AND CLIFFS, WATCHING THE BEAUTY AND MAJESTY OF THESE NATURAL WONDERS, I COULD ONLY IMAGINE A GOD, THE ONE I BELIEVE IN, (NOT TO SAY YOUR GOD IS NOT IMPORTANT) CARVING THIS CANYON A FEW MILLION YEARS AGO FOR ME TO APPRECIATE IT'S BEAUTY. OVER THE LOUD "DIN" OF THE TRAIN I COULD STILL HEAR THE LAUGHTER, AND SCREAMS OF EXCITED RAFTERS PADDLING THIS STRETCH OF THE GUNNISON WHICH WAS, MORE OR LESS SEDATE, WITH THE RIVER RUNNING NEXT TO THE TRAIN, FLOWING OUT FROM THE GARDEN OF THE GODS, WHICH IS ANOTHER NATURAL CARVING AND TRULY A GARDEN. IT LEFT ME TO NOW DEPEND ON THE WATER I BOTTLED IN GRAND JUNCTION BECAUSE THE TRAIN ROLLED FOR SEVERAL MILES THROUGH A DESERT LAND, MOST PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THAT UTAH IS MOSTLY DESERT (NOT LIKE THE MORMON'S SPELL IT - D-E-S-E-R-E-T), A GUY I JUNGLED WITH

ONE TIME SAID THE MORMONS ATTENDED THE L.S.D. CHURCH, I ASKED HIM WHY HE MADE THIS STATEMENT, HIS ANSWER WAS THAT THEY HAD TO BE ON L.S.D. BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T SPELL THE WORD DESERT! BUT GETTING BACK TO THIS RIDE THE TRAIN PASSED BY SEVERAL NAMED SIDINGS, THE FIRST WAS NAMED MOUNDS, THEN SPHINX, THEN DESERT, AND WE FINALLY PASSED A SIGN OR BILLBOARD ON WHICH SOMEONE PAINTED THE WORDS "WELCOME TO BUMPHUCK EGYPT," NO LIE. SOMEONE EVIDENTLY HAD BEEN SET OFF HERE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER AND AFTER SEEING THE NAMES OF EACH SIDING DECIDED TO INTIMATE THROUGH THE SIGN HE MADE THAT THERE TRULY IS A BUMPHUK EGYPT, ALTHOUGH NOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT IN CENTRAL UTAH, I WONDER WHAT WENT THROUGH THE MINDS OF PASSENGERS ON AMTRAK, OR THE RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR AFTER SEEING THIS SIGN? FINALLY THE TRAIN ROLLED THROUGH THE TOWN OF PRICE, THE BIGGEST TOWN BEFORE HELPER WHERE ADDITIONAL POWER WOULD BE ADDED PRIOR TO THE TRAIN GOING OVER THE MOUNTAINS AND TO THE TOP TO SOLDIER SUMMIT, THE SUMMIT WAS A SHIPPING POINT DURING WORLD WAR 2, WHERE OUR MILITARY WOULD LOAD OR UNLOAD EQUIPMENT TO BE SHIPPED OVER SEAS, OR PUT IN STORAGE. AT HELPER I DISEMBARKED LIKE A PASSENGER, AL.BE.IT. FURTHER BACK FROM THE STATION, WE HOBO'S TRAVEL LIKE PASSENGERS BUT IN REALITY WE ARE NOT PASSENGERS, WE PLAY AN IMAGINATION GAME TO PUT OURSELVES AT EASE. TO RELAX, ENJOY THE PASSING SCENERY, AND TRAVEL UNSEEN, BUT WHEN THE TRAIN STOPS WE ARE BACK INTO STEALTH MODE, HIDING UNTIL THE TRAIN ROLLS AWAY, AND NOW YOU HAVE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT I INTIMATED EARLIER, THE MILITARY TRAINING, INVISIBLE TRANSPORTATION, BLENDING INTO THE BACKGROUND, MASQUERADING AS A TOURIST, A PARALLEL BETWEEN HOBO'S, SOLDIERS, AND MILITARY VETERANS. THIS IS WHY WE ARE MISUNDERSTOOD IN OUR ACTIONS BY POLICE AS CRIMINALS, AS WE TRY MOVE FROM POINT "A" TO POINT "B" SIGHT UNSEEN!

UPON REACHING HELPER I REALIZED WHY BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID CAME TO THIS AREA SO OFTEN, THERE'S A BEAUTY IN THIS QUIET TOWN, A PEACEFUL STILLNESS THAT NO OTHER PLACE COULD MATCH, YES THERE WERE BIRDS AND A PLENTIFUL AMOUNT OF DEER. BUT OTHER THAN AN ABUNDANCE OF COAL THERE WAS NO REASON FOR ANYONE TO DESIRE TO ENTER THIS DEAD END, THE ACTUAL HOLE IN THE WALL IS A CIRCULAR BREAK IN THE MOUNTAINS THAT TURNS INTO A NATURAL CORRAL WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF WATER, GRASS, TREES, SHELTERED FROM BAD WEATHER, A HOME CREATED BY A GOD (ONCE AGAIN I WRITE THIS TO INTIMATE THAT MY GOD MIGHT BE

DIFFERENT FROM YOUR GOD, BUT BOTH ARE JUST AS REAL AND IMPORTANT) FOR ANYONE TO MOVE INTO FOR A PEACEFUL RELAXING LIFE.

THIS IS PROBABLY WHY THE RIO GRANDE RAILROAD SET UP THEIR SMALL TERMINAL HERE, AND STATIONED THE HELPER ENGINES, AND WHY HOBO'S WOULD RIDE TRAINS TO THIS LOCATION, GOD (AND LET'S NOT START MY EXPLANATIONS ABOUT GOD AGAIN) ALWAYS CREATES A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO DESIRE TO LIVE IN, BUT HE GIVES US A FREE WILL AND LETS US CHOOSE. BETWEEN WORK IN HELPER, PRICE, AND THE NEIGHBORING UTAH RAILWAY, DEER MEAT SUPPLIED BY THE UTAH DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE WHENEVER DEER ARE HIT AND KILLED BY TRUCKS, AND INEXPENSIVE ROOMS AT THE HELPER HOTEL OR HOUSING IN HELPER WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO PUT DOWN ROOTS HERE? ALTHOUGH HOBO'S ONLY STOPPED FOR SHORT PERIODS BEFORE MOVING ON, IT WAS THE SAME LIVING SITUATION THAT DREW THEM BACK HERE TIME AND TIME AGAIN, AND WHY THEY CONTINUE TO RETURN TO THIS LITTLE TOWN NESTLED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NORTHERN UTAH, THE TRUEST FORM OF A SHANGRI LA IMAGINED THAT IS A REALITY, A TRUE WELCOME HOME!

IT WAS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO LEAVE THIS WELCOMING TOWN, TO A DEGREE IT RESEMBLES THE STANLEY RESORT/HOTEL BUILT AS A RESORT/RETREAT BY GEORGE F. STANLEY, THE CREATOR AND OWNER OF THE COMPANY THAT BUILT THE STANLEY STEAMER, WHICH WAS BASICALLY A LOCOMOTIVE FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE TO DRIVE DOWN THE ROAD. WELL YOU'LL ASK WHY I DIDN'T PUT DOWN ROOTS IN HELPER UTAH, AFTER A FEW MONTHS, LET ALONE A FEW YEARS OF ULTIMATE FREEDOM BEING EXPERIENCED IN THIS STYLE OF LIFE, AND THE WAY YOU CAN MOVE WITHOUT NEED OR EXPECTATION OF PLANNING GETS INTO YOUR BLOOD, YOUR D.N.A, AS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITION REARS ITSELF. IT'S CALLED "ITCHY FEET," A DESIRE TO PACK UP AND MOVE ON FURTHER DOWN THE LINE, SEE OTHER HORIZONS, SEE OTHER PLACES, MEET UP WITH FRIENDS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS, SEE WHAT HAS STAYED THE SAME AND WHAT HAS CHANGED, AND TELL ABOUT YOUR ADVENTURES TO OTHERS SO THEY CAN LIVE YOUR LEWIS AND CLARK LIFE AND STAY SAFELY AT HOME.

BUT THAT TIME WILL ARRIVE, THAT NAGGING LONGING THAT INCISES YOU TO START PACKING, GETTING READY TO DEPART AND ONE DAY IT HAPPENS, WHAT CAUSES IT IS ANYBODY'S GUESS, A FEELING, A SOUND, A SMELL, WHATEVER

CAUSE THAT MAKES YOUR DECISION WILL HAPPEN. AND WHEN IT DOES YOU'LL BE GONE MORE THAN LIKELY IN THE NIGHT, LEAVING ONLY A MESSAGE OR SIGN IN A LOCATION AT THE TRAIN YARD SAYING GOOD BYE, I'LL BE BACK SOMETIME, WITH NO DATE AS TO WHEN THAT WILL BE, AND YOU'LL BE GONE, RIDING THE STEEL, THAT TWIN SILVER LINE, HEADING OFF FOR ANOTHER ADVENTURE TO EXPERIENCE AND TELL STORIES ABOUT. I MIGHT STATE THAT IT'S SPIRITUAL, NO, I'M NOT REFERRING TO RELIGION, JUST A SPIRIT THAT CREATED THE CAUSE OF YOUR DECISION TO GO BACK TO RIDING, SIMILAR TO THE MUSE WHICH INSPIRES PEOPLE TO WRITE LONG FLOWERY DESCRIPTIVE POETRY, ONCE THIS SPIRIT CAUSES YOU TO ACT THERE'S NO FIGHTING IT, YOU HEAD OUT AND BLAZE A NEW TRAIL!



CHAPTER 10

THE NEW TRAIL TOOK ME ACROSS SOLDIER SUMMIT AND A WINDING STAIRCASE DOWN THE WEST SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN, AND WITH EVERY TURN

YOU COULD SEE BOTH THE FRONT AND BACK OF THE TRAIN, AND AN AWESOME VIEW OF IMMIGRATION PASS, THE SAME VIEW THAT BRIGHAM YOUNG SAW LEADING THE MORMONS TOWARDS A FRUITFUL VALLEY THAT WOULD SOME DAY BE KNOWN AS BOUNTIFUL, JUST SOUTH OF PROVO. THE RIO GRANDE RAILROAD AT ONE TIME FILMED A PROMOTIONAL ADVERTISEMENT LAUDING THE BEAUTY OF THE WASATCH MOUNTAIN RANGE WHICH WAS A SETTLEMENT PROMOTION BY THE STATE OF UTAH TO GET PEOPLE TO MOVE INTO THE AREA, POPULATION INCREASE, POLITICAL, MORE FOR THE ROLLS TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE IN THE ELECTORATE. BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS TO SHOW THAT UTAH WAS NO LONGER THE WILD WEST, AND ASIDE FROM THE ORIGINAL MORMON RESIDENTS UTAH NEEDED INVESTMENT FROM OTHER SOURCES TO HELP IT PROSPER AND THRIVE. SHOWING OFF THE MOUNTAINS, VALLEYS, THE GREAT SALT LAKE WHICH MORTON SALT HAD ALREADY ESTABLISHED IT'S RECLAMATION OF SALT THROUGH EVAPORATION PONDS, THE PROMOTIONAL FILM WAS A WAY FOR THE RIO GRANDE TO CAPITALIZE ON THE FUTURE INDUSTRY THAT WOULD SOON COME TO THE STATE.

THE FILM ALSO SHOWED THE MOUNTAINS, SANDS, AND WEATHER TO PROMOTE TOURISM WHICH THE RAILROAD WOULD UTILIZE ITS TRAINS TO BRING PASSENGERS, TOURISTS, THAT WOULD FLOCK TO THE STATE. SOME OF THE TOURISTS CAME BY FREIGHT TRAIN, TO WORK THE SERVICE JOBS, WORKING THE WORST JOBS AVAILABLE THAT WOULD ENSURE THESE "TOURISTS" ENJOYED THEIR STAY AND WOULD RETURN REPEATEDLY, SPENDING THEIR MONEY. PROMOTION AND PROFITABILITY, AND WHO WOULD WORK THESE JOBS THAT NOBODY ELSE WANTED TO DO?, THE OTHER TOURISTS, THE HOBO'S!, RETIRING AWAY FROM THE GENERAL POPULACE IN THEIR HOME, THE JUNGLE, A PLACE THEY FELT AT HOME. A PLACE RESEMBLING THE WILD WEST THAT WAS (WHERE THE PEOPLE WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE) AND HOPING THE REST OF THE POPULACE WOULD LEAVE THEM IN PEACE!, THEY CAME IN BY THE HUNDREDS RIDING THE BOXCARS, GONDOLAS, LUMBER CARS, THE RODS, AND ROOFS. A VERITABLE INVASION OF FORMER MILITARY MEN AND WOMEN STILL REFUSING TO BE CIVILIZED, AND BLENDED INTO THE GENERAL POPULACE LIKE MINDLESS CLONES, THE UNSUNG HEROES OF AMERICA.

AT PRESENT I'M SITTING IN MY APARTMENT DRINKING A CAN OF CRAFT BEER CALLED DEAD MAN'S CURVE, AN IPA (OR INDIA PALE ALE, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T IMBIBE AND DABBLE IN CRAFT BEERS ALL THAT OFTEN), TASTY AND COLD, IT WAS NAMED AFTER THE SHARP 90% TURN ON I-90 HERE IN

CLEVELAND OHIO. I'M SURE EVERY CITY HAS A DEAD MAN'S CURVE, BUT CLEVELAND'S DEAD MAN'S CURVE IS THE ONLY ONE I KNOW THAT HAS A CRAFT BEER NAMED AFTER IT, BY THE SAME TOKEN DEAD MAN'S CURVE EMPLOYS MIGRATORY LABORERS, HOBO'S IF YOU WILL, AND SO DOES ANOTHER CRAFT BEER. I WAS TOLD ABOUT IT AFTER ARRIVING IN SALT LAKE CITY THAT YEAR, HITTING THE ROAD AT AGE 13, THE COMPANY WAS LOCATED IN THE CITY OF POCATELLO IDAHO, I WAS STILL IN THE MIND OF COLLECTING AS MUCH INFORMATION ABOUT THIS LIFE I WOULD BE LIVING. I DIDN'T CONSIDER IT AN INHERITANCE THEN AS I DO NOW, JUST A LEARNING EXPERIENCE, AND LEARN I DID ABOUT WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO LIVE LIFE AS A HOBO, BEING THE ONE WHO HELPS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR YOUR SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY TO THRIVE WITHOUT THE PROBLEMS OF YOUR PAST AND ALL THAT ENTAILS. AND ALLOWING ME TO LIVE MY LIFE AS AN ADVENTURER, AS I'VE SAID EARLIER - A MODERN MARCO POLO, BOUND FOR NEW HORIZONS, NOT SAMARKAN, ALTHOUGH I THINK I WENT THROUGH A COUNTRY CALLED SAMARKAN WHILE I WAS IN THE ARMY WITH THE 101ST AIRBORNE.

AFTER MAKING MY WAY TO ROPER YARD, THE MAIN RIO GRANDE TRAIN YARD SOUTH OF SALT LAKE CITY, I JUNGLED BEHIND A COFFEE COMPANY A COUPLE OF BLOCKS NORTH THAT WAS OWNED BY A MORMON FAMILY WHO MARKETED TO US "GENTILES." QUITE A WELCOMING FAMILY THE JACKSILL'S EMPLOYED HOBO'S OFTEN, KNOWING THEY WOULD ALWAYS BE AT WORK EARLIER THAN THE FAMILY, SEEING WE STAYED IN THE WOODS BEHIND THE BUSINESS, WITH THE MAINLINE OF THE RAILROAD NEARBY, AND WE WOULD WATCH OVER THE BUSINESS BECAUSE OUR HOME WAS THE COFFEE COMPANY, CHEAPER THAN HIRING A SECURITY COMPANY! LATER I WAS BACK AT ROPER YARD AT THE "CATCH OUT" WAITING TO GET THE TRANSFER LOCAL TO "OGGY DOG" (OGDEN) ON THE RIO GRANDE WHERE I WOULD CHANGE TO THE "UNCLE PETE" (UNION PACIFIC) TO RIDE FURTHER NORTH TO POCATELLO, THE CRAFT BEER COMPANY THERE WAS CALLED "SPUD," YES, YES, I KNOW, I KNOW, SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE HAD A SATIRE COMMERCIAL ABOUT "SPUD" STARRING CHEVY CHASE, BUT THIS WAS, A REAL BEER - SPUD!, IT DIDN'T LAST LONG, LIKE THE BEER IN NEW ORLEANS, JAX - SPUD WAS MORE LIKE A LAXATIVE, AND DRINKING IT WOULD HAVE THE CONSUMER SITTING ON THE THRONE FOR HOURS, BUT WHO WERE WE TO STAND IN THEIR WAY IF THESE FOLKS WANTED TO DRINK THIS STUFF AND GET THE "HERSHEY SQUIRTS." AND I'D WATCH TRUCK AFTER TRUCK LEAVE THE BREWERY EVERY DAY, THINKING THERE MUST BE A FERTILIZER PLANT THAT EVERYONE WHO DRINKS SPUD FLUSHES THEIR TOILET TO, SO IT CAN BE USED TO FERTILIZE IDAHO'S POTATO CROPS, SO

THEY CAN MAKE MORE SPUD, THE ULTIMATE IN RECYCLING! SORRY, ROTTEN JOKE, STILL VERY TRUE BECAUSE POTATOES HAVE BEEN USED FOR FERTILIZER IN POLAND THAT CREATES A LARGE AMOUNT OF A HEALTHY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT, MORE POTATOES, WHY SHOULDN'T POTATOES BE MADE INTO A DRINK THAT PRODUCES HUMAN WASTE THAT FERTILIZES THAT SAME AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT. CASE EXAMPLE, I COULD GIVE YOU MORE EXAMPLES, NAAAAAHHHHHHHHH, BETTER CONTINUE MY QUEST AT AGE 13!

POCATELLO SIT'S AT THE FOOT OF THE BITTERROOTS, A MOUNTAIN RANGE THAT BEGINS AT POCATELLO AND ENDS NORTH AT THE FOOT OF THE ST. JOHNS RANGE IN CENTRAL BRITISH COLUMBIA, THE BITTERROOTS WERE CALLED THIS BY THE LOCAL BLACKFOOT TRIBE BECAUSE A WILD PLANT THEY ATE, "CHIK-A-WA" HAD A ROOT THAT HAD A SAP THEY BOILED OFF THAT WAS QUITE BITTER. THE BLACKFOOT TRIBE NORMALLY FOUND NO USE FOR THE BITTER SAP UNTIL A TRAVELING BARTENDER OBTAINED SOME OF THE SAP AND REALIZED IT WOULD MELLOW HARSH DRINKS THAT USED SCOTCH AND THUS BEGAN A COMPANY IN THE U.S. TO PRODUCE THE OFTEN USED "BITTERS!" IN FACT BITTERS IS ALSO USED TO PRODUCE "TUNG OIL" WHICH GIVES A SMOOTH FINISH TO UNVARNISHED, OR UNLAQUERED FURNITURE, ALL FROM A ONCE THOUGHT USELESS SAP FROM A WILD PLANT! SINCE THEIR TREATY WITH THE GOVERNMENT THE BLACKFOOT TRIBE IS THE MAJOR PRODUCER, AND EXPORTER OF BITTERS AROUND THE WORLD. BECAUSE PRODUCTION OF BITTERS IS A DISGUSTING JOB, AND NOBODY WANTED TO DO THE WORK, HOBO'S CAME THROUGH HERE BY THE HUNDREDS TO BE EMPLOYED AND WOULD LEAVE WITH MONEY BELTS OVERFLOWING, THIS IS WHY "UNCLE PETE" (UNION PACIFIC) CONDUCTORS WOULD EXTRACT A "FARE" ALLOWING HOBO'S TO RIDE THEIR TRAIN UNMOLESTED, "FORTUNE PASSES EVERYWHERE!" QUITE MAJESTIC, THE BITTERROOTS ARE STILL ABUNDANT WITH BLACK BEAR, AND DEER, SOMETIMES ELK, YOU CAN STILL SEE THE WAGON RUTS FROM THE GREAT MOVEMENT OF SETTLERS HEADING OFF TO OREGON CROSSING THE PLAINS, TO THE EAST OF POCATELLO, AND ENTERING THE 1ST OF 13 PASSES THROUGH THE BITTERROOTS TO ENTER THE CASCADES, AND EVENTUALLY THE STATE OF OREGON. HEADING NORTH OUT OF POCATELLO ON THE U.P. WE CROSS THOSE WAGON RUTS, A VERTIBLE RIVER OF RUTS, HARD AS STONE AND BLEACHED WHITE, A REMINDER OF THE PERSISTENCE OF PEOPLE WHO WILL COMPLETE THEIR AIMS, THAT PERSISTENCE THAT DRIVES THE NEW GENERATION OF HOBO'S. THAT PERSISTENCE IS INFECTIOUS, AND AIDED MOSES TO LEAD THE ISREALITE NATION OUT OF EGYPT TO THEIR "PROMISED LAND! IT WAS PERSISTENCE THAT HELPED CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC TO DISCOVER THE

NEW WORLD, IT WAS PERSISTENCE THAT AIDED LEWIS AND CLARK TO CROSS THE CONTINENT AND FIND A NEW ROUTE TO THE ATLANTIC, IT WAS PERSISTENCE THAT AIDED CORNELIUS VANDERBILT TO CREATE THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD. IT WAS PERSISTENCE THAT GAVE THE MORMONS THE DRIVE TO CROSS THE WASATCH RANGE TO SETTLE IN WHAT WOULD BE SALT LAKE CITY, AND SO IT'S PERSISTENCE THAT DRIVES HOBO'S TO LIVE THE FREE TRAVELING LIFE THAT THEY LEAD!"

PERSISTENCE IS AN OFTEN UNUSED WORD, BUT DESCRIBING FOLKS WHO HAVE A DRIVE TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES PERSISTENCE, AND PERSEVERANCE, DAMN!, HOW DID I GET STARTED ON THE "P" WORD'S?, WELL NO MATTER, IT'S NOT TIME TO START PREACHING YET, BUT SOON IT WILL BE. A MISSION PREACHER I KNEW WHEN I FIRST MET HIM AT AGE 16, IN PADUCAH KENTUCKY RELATED TO ME THAT HE PREFERRED HAVING HOBO'S STOP AT HIS COUNTRY MISSION BECAUSE THEY WERE ALWAYS TASKED WITH THE LONG WALK IN THE WOODS FINDING HIS MISSION. BUT THEY WERE PERSISTENT, AND PERSEVERED TO GET THERE, HE KNEW IF HE ASKED THEY WOULD DO ANYTHING HE NEEDED TO BE DONE BECAUSE HE TREATED THEM LIKE EQUALS, IT'S A PART OF THEIR CULTURAL HERITAGE, AND PART OF THEIR D.N.A!

AT AGE 17 I STOPPED HERE TO WASH THE GREASE FROM MY TRAVELS OFF AND THE MISSION DIRECTOR ASKED IF I WOULD HELP HARVEST THEIR GREEN BEANS, I ASSUME HE FELT I WOULD COMPLAIN, BECAUSE HE ASKED ME IN A GRUFF TONE VOICE. I JUMPED IN AND BEGAN PICKING, AROUND SUNDOWN HE TOLD ME TO STOP, I LOOKED AND SAW I HAD PICKED 11 BUSHEL OF THEM, THE DIRECTOR TOLD ME HE HAD NEVER SEEN SOMEONE FROM THE TRAINS WORK SO HARD, AND I GOT THE BIGGEST WIDE EYED STARES WHEN I TOLD HIM MY 1ST JOB WAS MAKING CHARCOAL AT AGE 8. I'VE WORKED HARD ALL OF MY LIFE AND CAN'T STAND TO SIT IDLE, I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING, KEEP OCCUPIED OR I'LL GO "BUG HOUSE CRAZY," EVEN NOW AT 1:25 AM I'M WRITING THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY, WHILE WATCHING A DVD MOVIE AT THE SAME TIME. AND THAT WAS THE CASE AFTER FINISHING THE JOB AT THE SPUD BREWERY IN POCATELLO, WAITING AT THE ROAD CROSSING ON THE NORTH SIDE OF "POKY" I WATCHED AS THE SILVERBOW TRAIN CREEP ACROSS THE YARD TO SLOWLY SHOW OFF CARS SO ME AND 11 OTHER HOBO'S COULD CATCH A RIDE. FROM HERE TO MONTANA "UNCLE PETE" WAS VERY ACCOMMODATING. GREEN FORESTED HILLS, WITH ELK WANDERING THE FIELDS, CRYSTAL CLEAR STREAMS, AND A PEACEFUL QUIET THAT NEVER CARRIED THE SOUND OF A

TRUCK OR A GANG FIGHT, JUST THE SOUND OF THE FREIGHT TRAIN I WAS RIDING, AND THE SWEET SMELL OF FREEDOM, UNTIL PROVEN OTHERWISE - SHANG-RI-LA! IN TODAY'S WORLD MANY NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES WANT TO RETURN THE LAND TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE, NO CARS, NO TRAINS, NO AIRPORTS, EVERYTHING AS THE GREAT SPIRIT ORIGINALLY CREATED IT, I WISH THE SAME THING, NOT BECAUSE I'M NATIVE AMERICAN, BUT BECAUSE I APPRECIATE BEAUTY OF LIFE THAT IS UNSPOILED, UNTOUCHED, FREE!



CHAPTER 11

SO HERE I WAS, ON A RATTLING BOXCAR RIDING **UNCLE PETE** (NOT **UNCLE KRAKER**, ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES THE CREWS ACTED LIKE ONE) AND IT FINALLY IMITATES THE **DIRTY & RAGGED GOING WEST**, SLOWING DOWN AND WINDING THROUGH HILLS AND CLIFFS, IT RESEMBLES THE **DURANGO & SILVERTON SCENIC RAILWAY**. SHEER ROCK CLIFFS, IF A TRAIN DERAILS HERE I'D HAVE A 300 FOOT FALL TO THE BOTTOM OF A VERY ROCKY CANYON IN WHICH FLOWS A RAGING RIVER, THEN IT OPENS UP TO A WIDE VALLEY WITH A FIELD FULL OF **MONTANA BLONDES**. (SHEEP) NOT WHAT YOU'D WANT TO HAVE FOR A GIRLFRIEND BUT SHEEP RANCHING WAS A BIG INDUSTRY IN THE EARLY 1900'S WHICH CREATED MANY **RANGE WARS**, AT ONE TIME **HOBO'S** HAD TO BE CAREFUL WHERE THEY TRAVELED, AND WHO THEY TOLD WHAT JOBS THEY WERE GOING FOR! TALK THE WRONG WAY TO THE WRONG PERSON AND YOU COULD END UP HANGING FROM A ROPE IN A TREE!, SO ARRIVING IN **SILVERBOW** I ALSO HAD TO REMEMBER THAT THE SURROUNDING HILLS ARE ACTUALLY **COPPER TAILINGS**, REMNANTS OF A PAST MINING INDUSTRY, THUS ANY GROUND WATER IS POLLUTED, IF A PERSON DRINKS FROM STREAMS HERE IT COULD BE DEADLY! THE CITY OF **SILVERBOW** HAS TO HAVE IT'S WATER PUMPED IN FROM **HELENA**, OTHERWISE THE ONLY FRESH WATER IS WHAT YOU BRING IN FROM ANOTHER STATE, OR BOTTLED WATER BOUGHT AT **CONVENIENCE STORES**. TRUE **ECOLOGICAL POLLUTION**, **GRETA THUNDBERG**, THE **SWEDISH GIRL** WHO CAMPAIGNS FOR **ELECTRIC CARS**, AND **ABOLISHING GASOLINE**, SHOULD JOIN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THAT! THIS IS WHY I'M SO FORTUNATE TO LIVE ON **LAKE ERIE**, I WAS LOOKING FOR A LOCAL ON THE **MONTANA WESTERN** GOING BACK TO **BUTTE**, BUT NO SUCH LUCK, ADD TO THAT THE CLEAR SKIES TURNED TO DRIZZLE, I ENDED UP WALKING THE 3 MILES TO **BUTTE** ON THE **ABANDONED GREAT NORTHERN ROADBED**, STOPPING PERIODICALLY TO PULL **DATE NAILS**.

THESE WERE WHAT WAS USED TO TELL RAILROADERS WHAT DATE A TIE WAS PUT IN SO IT COULD BE CALCULATED WHEN TO REPLACE IT, WITH ALL THE SWEAT AND MUSCLE IT TOOK **HOBOS** TO LAY RAILS WE BELIEVE THAT PART OF A **HOBO'S SPIRIT** IS NOW A PART OF THE **DATE NAIL**, CARRYING **DATE NAILS** WITH US WILL BRING **GOOD LUCK**! BUT **GOOD LUCK** COMES IN MANY FORMS AND NO-ONE CAN TELL YOU OTHERWISE, IN FACT **GOOD LUCK** IS A **SPIRIT**, OR SHOULD I SAY **SPIRIT(S)** FOR THERE ARE **HOBO SPIRITS**, THIS COMES IN THE FORM OF **CAMPFIRE ASHES**, WITH THE **HOBO NATION** WE TREAT A **CAMPFIRE** WITH RESPECT. THIS IS A MEETING PLACE FOR **POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISCUSSION**, **LAWS AND HOBO COURT JUDGEMENT**, **FEEDING**, **CLEANING**, **ENTERTAINMENT**, AND **SECURITY**, THIS IS WHAT A **CAMPFIRE** IS TO A **HOBO**, AND BECAUSE WE RESPECT IT WE SALUTE THIS FIRE WITH A CEREMONY THAT IS

TRADITION, WE BUILD OUR FIRES TO HEAT, AND WELCOME, BUT WE SALUTE IT AND THE 4 PREVAILING WINDS BECAUSE THEY ALSO ARE A PART OF IT. THE 4 WINDS ARE SPIRITUAL AND GIVE LIFE TO THE FIRE, BUT EACH HAS ITS OWN PERSONALITY AND SPIRIT, THE NORTH WIND IS THE COOLING WIND, IT BRINGS RELIEF FROM THE SUMMER HEAT, IT ALSO BRINGS THE WINTER TO PUT THE EARTH TO SLEEP. WE SALUTE THE SOUTH WIND, IT BRINGS WARM BREEZES TO WAKE THE EARTH FROM ITS WINTER SLUMBER, WE SALUTE THE EAST WIND, ALTHOUGH IT BRINGS STORMS THEY ARE NEEDED TO SHAKE DEAD LIMBS FROM TREES, AND DEAD GRASSES FROM THE EARTH, AND HELPS MAKE LIVING PLANTS THRIVE. WE SALUTE THE WEST WIND, IT BRINGS RAIN, AND SUNSETS, AND TELLS US EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT! WE ALSO ADD CAMPFIRE ASHES, WE BELIEVE THAT PART OF ALL WHO GATHER AROUND A CAMPFIRE GIVE LIFE TO THE FIRE, SO PART OF OUR SPIRIT GOES INTO THE FIRE AND REMAINS IN THE ASHES, WHEN WE START ANOTHER FIRE THE ACTION REPEATS, SO EVERYONE COLLECTS THE CAMPFIRE ASHES, AND IF ONLY ONE OF US ARE AT A CAMPFIRE PHYSICALLY, WITH THE ASHES ADDED THE SINGLE HOBO IS NEVER ALONE BECAUSE A SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY IS MADE FROM THAT FIRE AND ASHES SURROUNDING THEM WITH PEACE, TRANQUILITY, AND GOOD LUCK!

EASTERN MYSTICISM HAS BECOME A FASHION IN OUR PRESENT SOCIETY, EASTERN MYSTICISM HAS GIVEN MANY PEOPLE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE, AND MANY BELIEVE THAT SALUTING THE 4 WINDS IS EASTERN MYSTICISM, AND IT DID COME FROM HOBO'S WHO ORIGINATED FROM THE EASTERN UNITED STATES, BUT IT IS NOT EASTERN MYSTICISM! IT IS HOBO TRADITION, CULTURE, INHERITANCE, TOO MANY PEOPLE TRY TO ASSOCIATE HOBO CULTURE WITH INFLUENCES FROM OTHER CULTURES BUT REALIZE THE MULTINATIONAL PEOPLE THAT FOUGHT IN THE CIVIL WAR, A PIECE OF THEIR CULTURE WAS ADDED TO A SALAD BOWL, THEN HEATED IN THE FIRES OF WAR AND MELTED. WHAT EMERGED WAS A HARDENED STEEL CULTURE THAT IS UNIQUELY AMERICAN, AND THOUGH MANY OF US CAME FROM OTHER PARTS OF AMERICAN LIFE WE ARE A NATION WITHIN THIS NATION CALLED THE UNITED STATES! OUR LEGACY IS THAT WE LEAVE THIS WORLD WITH EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY, WE TRY TO LEAVE IT IN BETTER SHAPE THAN WE FOUND IT, THE REST OF THE WORLD TRASHES IT REPEATEDLY, STILL WE DO OUR BEST TO CLEANSE IT FOR OTHERS TO ENJOY, WHEN THEY FIND IT ORDERLY, AND WELL STOCKED FOR THEM TO USE, AND ASK THEY DO THE SAME FOR THE NEXT PEOPLE WHO COME DOWN THE ROAD!

AND ON THE ROAD I WALKED, TIE BY TIE WITH A STEADY DRIZZLE FALLING, DRIPPING OFF MY CORNSTRIPE HAT FEELING THE EYES OF ALL THE HOBO'S WHO WALKED THIS ROUTE BEFORE ME, SPIRITS OF FORMER TIMES, OF FORMER PEOPLE WHO DUG EACH FOOT. LAID EACH TIE, HAMMERED EACH SPIKE, SHOWING ME THE LINE, AND THE LIFE, MY INHERITANCE OF THE HOBO NATION, AND EACH DATE NAIL I SAW AS I WALKED THOSE 2 MILES SPOKE OF ADVENTURE AND HISTORY IF I WALKED ANOTHER FOOT, UNTIL I STOOD IN FRONT OF THE BOARDED PASSENGER STATIONS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN, AND MILWAUKEE ROAD. IT WAS HERE THAT I SPENT SEVERAL NIGHTS CAMPED INSIDE THE GREAT NORTHERN STATION WITH A SMALL CAMPFIRE LOOKING AT SEVERAL HUNDRED MONIKERS DATING BACK TO 1891, EACH MONIKER TOLD OF A SEPARATE PERSON AND PERSONALITY TO CALL FAMILY. I BREATHED WOOD SMOKE, AND SWEET MOUNTAIN AIR INTOXICATING ME THAT I BEGAN TO REALIZE HOBO'S ARE MY FAMILY, AND THIS IS WHERE I BELONGED, WHAT A REVELATION TO A YOUNG HOBO OF 13, HOW MANY 13 YEAR OLDS HAVE YOU SEEN THAT WOULD LIVE THIS WAY? YET I DID BEING EXPOSED TO THIS LIFE AS A CHILD OF A LADY HOBO, IT WAS NOW I THANKED MY MOTHER FOR ALLOWING HOBO'S TO LIVE IN THE WOODS BEHIND OUR HOME IN LAMPASSAS TEXAS, AND IT BESPOKE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FRIENDS AND FAMILY. NO ONE REALLY RECOGNIZES THEIR NEED OF FAMILY UNTIL THEY HAVE NO FAMILY, THIS IS WHY I GREW UP WITH OLDER MEN AND WOMEN MY MOTHER LOVED AND TRUSTED DURING HER DAYS ON THE ROAD, TO SEE THAT HOBO'S ARE A NATION, MIGRATORY, BUT STILL A NATION WITH ITS OWN TRADITIONS, ITS OWN CULTURE, ITS OWN WAY OF LIFE THAT HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS THAT CAME BEFORE EACH PREVIOUS GENERATION. AS A CHILD IN LAMPASSAS I WITNESSED HOBO'S COMING INTO THE JUNGLE TELLING ABOUT SIGNS OF PEOPLE AND INCIDENTS THAT WOULD SOON ARRIVE OR COME TO PASS, AND WITHIN A DAY OR 4, WHAT WAS BESPOKE BY THESE FREE RAIL ENTHUSIASTS CAME TO PASS. MORE INFORMATIVE THAN OUR PRESENT C.I.A. OR F.B.I, I GREW UP WITH ACTIVITIES THAT WERE A CULTURE HANDED DOWN THROUGH PEOPLE THAT LIVED A LIFE ONLY SATIRIZED BY THE UNINFORMED MEDIA. CULTURE AND NATIONALISM IS NOT LEARNED, IT IS LIVED, EXPERIENCED, HANDED DOWN THROUGH EACH SUCCESSIVE GENERATION, IT IS NOT DECIDED BY A GOVERNMENT, TRUE A GOVERNMENT IS A PART OF NATIONALISM, BUT GOVERNMENTS DO NOT DECIDE WHAT IS THE CULTURE THAT REPRESENTS THE NATION, THE CITIZENS OF THE NATION DO!

CHAPTER 12

I SAW THIS WHEN I LOOKED ON THE WALL OF THE INSIDE OF THE GREAT NORTHERN PASSENGER STATION, AND THERE WAS A MESSAGE WRITTEN BY A HOBO WHO LIVED IN THE WOODS BEHIND OUR HOME IN LAMPASSAS SAYING:

"JON, YOUR UNCLE, BLACK DUCK, WELCOMES YOU TO THE REAL MONTANA,

**THIS IS
ONE OF
HOMES,
THE**



**BUT
OUR
LIKE**

CULTURE YOU GREW UP IN, USE THE HOME, KEEP IT CLEAN AND ORDERLY, REPLACE THE FOOD AND WOOD, AND CLOSE THE DOOR WHEN YOU LEAVE, ANOTHER OF OUR NATION WILL BE COMING BEHIND YOU. THEY WILL USE THIS PLACE THE SAME AS YOU, AND THEY WILL DO THE SAME FOR THE NEXT OF OUR NATION WHEN THEY LEAVE, THIS IS YOUR INHERITANCE, THIS IS WHY WE ARE A NATION WITHIN A NATION!"

WHAT A CONCEPT?, A NATION WITHIN A NATION, THAT ORIGINALLY HAD NEVER CROSSED MY MIND BUT AS I PONDERED THE IDEA THE THOUGHT OF SUCH A NOTION BEGAN TO MAKE SENSE, I WAS WORKING AT CARRYING COAL IN A "GATOR" FROM A COAL CAR, A DELIVERY FOR A LOCAL HEATING COMPANY. THIS MADE DELIVERIES TO HOMES AND BUSINESSES THAT STILL HEATED THAT HEATED WITH SUCH, THE LOCAL MISSION ALSO HEATED WITH COAL, AND AS I WAS UNLOADING THIS BLACK ROCK I BEGAN DISCUSSING HOBO'S WITH THE "MISSION STIFFS" THE IDEA THAT HOBO'S ARE A SEPARATE PEOPLE. THEIR FEELINGS WERE THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE "CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH" ARE INDEED A SEPARATE NATION, BUT NATIONS ARE A FICKLE IDEA TO CLAIM FOR A MIGRATORY PEOPLE, AND HARD TO PROVE. NATIONS HAVE A CHARTER, AND A BILL TO SHOW LEGALITIES FOR ITS CITIZENS, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED BY OTHER NATIONS AS A FOREIGN POWER WHICH HOBO'S MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO HAVE REALIZED. A NATION ALSO HAS AN EMBASSY AND REPRESENTATIVES IN THE AMERICAN CAPITOL WHICH HOBO'S ALSO DON'T HAVE, ITS OWN CURRENCY, LANGUAGE, AND TRADE SYSTEMS. MY ARGUMENT WAS WE HAD OUR OWN LANGUAGE, SOMEWHAT BASED ON THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE (I LOATHE TO CALL IT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BECAUSE HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS - KING CHARLES WINDSOR WOULD S@#\$%&T A BRICK IF I DID) IT STILL HAS ITS OWN MEANINGS, AND EACH WORD OR PHRASE ARE RECORDED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT PLACES, AND IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT BOOKS, INCLUDING THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. WE HAVE OUR OWN CURRENCY IN THE THINGS WE CREATE, THEN TRADE WITH OTHER FOLKS - THE BARTER SYSTEM, WE HAVE A QUASI-EMBASSY WITH SPECIFIC RETIRED HOBO'S IN CITIES ACROSS THIS COUNTRY WHO LITIGATE, AND LOBBY, AND AT TIMES LEGISLATE FOR THE CITIZENS OF OUR NATION, THE HOBO NATION! EXCLUSIVE AS IT SOUNDS WE ARE A NATION WHO MOVE ACROSS THIS LAND AND ACT AS STEWARDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, WE HAVE A FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPACT TO SHARE, WE WORK FOR EVERYONE, NOT JUST HOBO'S BECAUSE WE ARE INCLUSIVE, AND THE SURROUNDING UNITED STATES IS NOT, WE GIVE HOPE THAT THE U.S. WILL WAKE UP AND REALIZE WE HAVE A BETTER DESIGN ON HOW TO LIVE AND TREAT OTHERS, WE TRULY ARE A NATION! BUT THIS IS A DISCUSSION FOR ANOTHER TIME.

CHAPTER

**BUTTE
COPPER
THE
LARGEST
U.S.,
BERKELEY
LONGER**

**13**

**WAS A
MINE,
IN THE
PIT NO**

OPERATES, BUT IT'S DEEP, CRAZY DEEP, THE CITY TRIED TO USE IT AS A WATER SOURCE BUT WITH ALL THE CHEMICALS USED IN MINING THAT WOULD FILL THE PIT WITH THE WORST TOXIC SOUP IN THE WORLD, SO HERE IT IS GRETA THUNDBERG, THE NEXT ECOLOGICAL PROBLEM TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE CLEAN UP OF!!!!!! THIS HUGE MOUNTAIN THAT THE TOWN OF BUTTE WAS BUILT ON STARTED OUT AS A TENT CITY, TO QUICKLY MOVE TO OTHER LOCATIONS, AND FOLLOW THE TRAVELING FORTUNE THAT WAS THE PROSPECTER'S LIVES. BUT BECAUSE THE FORTUNE THAT NORMALLY WAS FOLLOWED BY THESE "BUSINESSES" DID NOT TRAVEL WITH MINERS AND PROSPECTER'S MORE "BUSINESSES" BECAME STATIONARY, BUILT BUILDINGS ON THE MOUNTAIN, AND ATTRACTED OTHER BUSINESSES TO COME TO THE MOUNTAIN! SO BOTH THE MILWAUKEE ROAD AND THE GREAT NORTHERN BUILT ROUTES INTO BUTTE TO BRING MORE BUSINESSES, AND MORE PEOPLE TO BUTTE, NOW KNOWING THAT REVELATION, IS IT ANY WONDER THAT "MY FAMILY, THE HOBO'S" CAME IN TOO, LIVING AND WORKING THE SAME HILLS, AND MOUNTAINS AS THE ORIGINAL FOUNDERS OF BUTTE DID SO MANY YEARS PRIOR? STILL REFUSING TO LIVE IN TOWN, CAMPING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF BUTTE, TO LIVE THEIR WAY AS THE NATIVE TRIBAL AMERICANS HAVE DONE FOR CENTURIES?, AND RESPECTING THE LAND, AND PRACTICING THEIR SELF MADE, AND INHERITED CULTURE? BECAUSE UNLIKE THE PEOPLE COMING INTO THIS AREA BY PASSENGER TRAIN THE HOBO'S KNEW AND UNDERSTOOD MORE WHAT THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE LAND EXPECTED, NEEDED, AND APPRECIATED FROM THEM. INHERITANCE, SOMETHING AS OLD AS TIME, AND GETTING OLDER EVERY YEAR, THIS IS WHAT I, AS WELL AS OTHER HOBO'S, INHERITED, AND THAT IS THE INHERITANCE WE LEAVE TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF HOBO'S. I PRACTICED THIS AT AGE 13, WHEN WORKING IN TOWN, AND DEALING WITH THE TOWNS CITIZENS, AND LIVING AWAY FROM TOWN, NOT A "PRACTICED" ACT, BUT LIKE ANIMAL INSTINCT, IT WAS, AND IS A PART OF MY D.N.A. EVEL KNEVEL WAS BORN HERE, THE SON OF A USED CAR DEALER, HE TRAVELED ACROSS THIS COUNTRY ON A MOTORCYCLE USING HIS WITS, AND ABILITIES LEARNED, INHERITED FROM HIS FAMILY, TO JUMP THE MOTORCYCLE OVER CARS, AND BUSES, IN EVERY CITY THAT WOULD LET HIM. EVEL ALSO LIVED A HOBO LIFE, AND LIKE HIS FOREFATHERS, HE INHERITED THIS CULTURE. THE CULTURE OF THE HOBO'S, THEN PASSED IT DOWN TO HIS SON ROBBIE, I WORKED AT THE KNEVEL USED CAR LOT, WALKING UPHILL EVERY DAY, A TRUE 45% (THIS MEANS THE ROAD RISES 45 FEET FOR EVERY 100 FEET FORWARD IT EXTENDS) WALK TO WHERE THE CAR LOT WAS LOCATED, IT BUILT MY LEGS UP, AND MY ENDURANCE. AND EVERY DAY I SWORE THAT THE BEST, MOST PROFITABLE BUSINESS IN TOWN TO OWN AND OPERATE WOULD BE FIXING BRAKES, AND TRANSMISSIONS, THIS IS ANOTHER JOB I WORKED AT IN BUTTE, AND WHY I RETURNED REPEATEDLY. AN

AVAILABLE JOB THAT NO ONE WOULD EXPECT ME TO HAVE, I COULD HAVE PUT DOWN ROOTS HERE, BUT I ALSO INHERITED THE SPIRIT OF WANDERING, HOBOING!

AND THE STARK, BUT BEAUTIFUL TALL MOUNTAINS BECKONED ME STILL TO TRAVEL, MORE TO SEE, AND WORK, AND LIKE, AND THRIVE, AND THRIVE I DID, EVEN YEARS LATER WHEN I'D COME BACK TO BE A SHEPHERD FOR THE WINTER, TENDING LARGE FLOCKS OF SHEEP. I'D BUILD SNOW DENS FOR THE SHEEP, AND CARE FOR THEM ALL WINTER INTO THE SPRING WITH NO OTHER HUMAN CONTACT, AT THAT POINT I WAS COMMITTED TO THE JOB, BUT IT WAS ALSO AN ADVENTURE, SHEEP, I FOUND, ARE A LOT LIKE YOUNG CHILDREN AND BLEAT, OR CRY WHENEVER THEY FEEL THREATENED OR ABANDONED. THIS IS WHY, IN THE BIBLE, DAVID PLAYED A HARP AND SANG TO THEM, CALMING THEM TO FEEL COMFORTED, AND PROTECTED, THE WORK WAS REWARDING BUT LONG HOURS MAKE A PERSON WANT TO BE AROUND PEOPLE AGAIN! AND AFTER AN \$18,000.00 WINTER PAYCHECK I JUST WANTED TO RIDE, TO BE WITH MY OWN PEOPLE, THE HOBO'S.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT AN EMPTY FIELD, OR PASTURE, OR IF YOU'VE EVER LOOKED AT THE GREAT PLAINS WHAT DO YOU SEE?, AN EMPTY SPACE?, A PLACE TO BUILD NEW HOMES?, BUSINESSES?, INDUSTRY?, DO YOU SEE THE FALLACY OF THAT VISION? DO YOU IMAGINE WHAT I SEE WHEN I LOOK AT AN EMPTY FIELD?, A COMMUNITY!, A COMMUNITY OF NATURE, OF BIRDS, PRAIRIE DOGS, SNAKES, COYOTES, HORSES, LYNX, ALL MANNER OF WILDLIFE, A COMMUNITY THAT IS DIVERSE, MULTICULTURAL (IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING) EXACTLY THE SAME WAY AS THE REST OF THE WORLD, AND AMERICA! THIS IS ALSO WHAT THE HOBO NATION IS!, AND IT'S AN UPHILL BATTLE I WILL HAVE, TO PROVE TO YOU AND THE REST OF THE U.S. THAT IT IS A NATION WITHIN A NATION, BUT IT'LL BE A WORTHY BATTLE, AND IT'LL COME TO PASS, AND I'LL SEE IT, IF NOT WHILE I'M ALIVE, THEN FROM THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAINS (HOBO HEAVEN)!

SOME PEOPLE MAY PARALLEL MY LIFE WITH THAT OF A COWBOY, AND THERE ARE MANY MIRROR IMAGES IN THIS ASSESSMENT, WE BOTH APPRECIATE OPEN SPACES, WE BOTH LONG FOR OUR FACE IN THE WIND, WE BOTH WORK HARD AND PLAY HARD. WE BOTH CAMP IN THE FIELDS AND FORESTS, WE BOTH

GATHER AROUND A CAMPFIRE, WE BOTH ENJOY SUNSETS AND SUNRISES, WE BOTH GET PAID CASH BUT WE SPEND IT ON THINGS WE NEED FOR NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE, THIS IS OUR WAY OF INVESTING. THIS IS OUR SOCIAL SECURITY, OUR CULTURE, OUR WAY OF LIFE, THIS IS A FACT, NOT AN IMPRESSION, A REALITY, FACE IT, ACCEPT IT, THERE'S NO CHANGING IT!

ROLLING ACROSS MONTANA FROM BUTTE EASTWARD THAT YEAR TOOK ME THROUGH LIVINGSTON, AND THE GREAT EASTERN PLAINS OF MONTANA INTO SOUTH DAKOTA WHICH WASN'T ALL THAT NEW TO ME, NOT THAT I EVER WAS IN SOUTH DAKOTA BEFORE THAT TIME, BUT BECAUSE I GREW UP WITH THE HARD BAKED PLAINS, THAT'S ALL YOU SEE IN LAMPASSAS. BUT WHERE WE ONLY HAVE DESERT STYLE PLAINS WITH LITTLE SURFACE WATER SOUTH DAKOTA HAS BEAUTIFUL WET PLAINS WITH PLENTY OF STREAMS, AND LAKES, ALL RICHLY GREEN WITH LIFE, AND SPIRIT. IT'S THE CLEANNESS OF THE STATE THAT ALWAYS ATTRACTED ME, AND ALWAYS WILL, AT NIGHTS I COULD WALK AMONG THE FIELDS, BACK ROADS, AND DOWNTOWN AREAS AND FEEL LIKE I'M NEVER GOING TO BE BOTHERED BY THE HAZARDS OF IMMENSE CITIES! THAT'S NOT TO SAY THAT THERE ARE NO HAZARDS IN THIS PART OF SOUTH DAKOTA, DICKINSON IS A COLLEGE TOWN NOTED FOR EARLY WRITERS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO PAY FOR TUITION AT SMALL COLLEGE TOWNS SUCH AS DICKINSON TO PROMOTE WRITING TO YOUNG PEOPLE DIGGING OUT OF THE DEPRESSION DAYS. SUCH STUDENTS THAT LIVED THROUGH THOSE YEARS ENJOYED THE BENEFITS OF A NEW DEAL EDUCATION WHICH IS WHAT THIS WAS, SEVERAL WRITERS WENT ON TO BECOME LAWYERS, NEWSPAPER MEN, INDUSTRIALISTS, SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN, WALTER CRONKITE AND ROGER MUDD, REPORTERS FROM C.B.S. STARTED OUT AS NEW DEAL STUDENTS IN THEIR YOUNGER YEARS! THESE COLD WATER COLLEGES STILL NEEDED BASIC AMENITIES, THEREFORE THEY ENLISTED HOBO'S INTO THEIR EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTS AS A REASON TO CHARGE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MORE FOR TUITION.

THE LOCAL POPULATION HARASSED THE NEW DEAL STUDENTS AND THE HOBO JANITORS STATING THESE PEOPLE WERE TAKING MONEY AND FOOD FROM RESIDENTS, WHEREAS THE STUDENTS COULDN'T ESCAPE THEIR HARASSER'S, HOBO'S COULD DISAPPEAR INTO THE JUNGLE. MANY PEOPLE WOULD SAY THAT THE BOOGIE MAN LIVES DOWN THERE, EVEN TODAY HOBO'S FRESH FROM THE ROAD WILL BE HARASSED WALKING ON THE TOWNS STREETS, BUT NO CITIZEN WILL COME DOWN TO THE JUNGLE! AND AT NIGHT THE FIELDS ARE ALIVE WITH

LOCUSTS, AND FIREFLIES, BULLFROGS CROAKING, AND IN THE DISTANCE THE MOANING SIRENS CALL OF A TRAIN CAN BE HEARD, SOME PEOPLE CALL IT NOISE, BUT I CALL IT MUSIC! AND IT THRILLS MY HEART AND SOUL, THE BECKONING ECHO'S THROUGH MY HEAD, IT'S SOMETHING I CAN'T DENY, AND SO WHEN THE TRAIN PULLS UP I SPOT THE CAR TO RIDE AND CLIMB ON BOARD, ALLOWING THE CREW, DISPATCHER, AND THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD (NO I'M NOT EXPLAINING THE GOD THING AGAIN) TO DECIDE WHERE WE GO.

TRIBAL AMERICANS USED TO CALL THE RAILROAD "THE IRON BUFFALO" BECAUSE IT WOULD RUN MINDLESS ACROSS THE PLAINS UNLESS THERE WAS SOMEONE TO DIRECT THE HERD, BY THE SAME TOKEN THERE IS A MAGAZINE CALLED THE IRON HORSE REFERRING TO ANY MOTORCYCLE. THE IRON HORSE IS THE DESCENDANT OF THE HORSE ON THE PLAINS, AND SO THE IRON BUFFALO BECAME THE FREIGHT TRAIN OF TODAY, STILL A MINDLESS BEAST UNLESS DIRECTED BY A PERSON WHO HAS THE INTELLIGENCE TO GIVE IT DIRECTION. THE MORE THE YEARS GO BY THE MORE THE PRESENT REFLECTS THE PAST, AN OLD QUOTE USED TO BE USED AS A GUIDING TOOL "THOSE WHO FORGET THE PAST ARE DOOMED TO REPEAT IT." THE POINT OF THIS IS THAT PEOPLE MIGRATE,

THE FIRST HUMANS: ADAM AND EVE MIGRATED FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN, THE ISRAELITES MIGRATED FROM EGYPT ACROSS A DESERT LAND FOR 40 YEARS,

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES MIGRATED ACROSS ISRAEL DURING HIS 3 YEAR MINISTRY.

THE PILGRIMS MIGRATED ACROSS THE ATLANTIC TO THE NEW WORLD,

AND SO HOBO'S HAVE MIGRATED ACROSS THE U.S. SINCE THE CIVIL WAR, EACH GROUP WERE MOVERS AND ADVENTURERS, WITH STORIES TO TELL, AND DOCUMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO READ, ENJOY, AND IMAGINE WHAT THEIR LIVES MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAD THEY BEEN ALIVE DURING THAT TIME IT'S THAT SIMPLE.

CROSSING SOUTH DAKOTA THE RAILS STILL CROSS A VOLCANIC REGION, THIS STATE HAS BEEN REPRESENTED AS BEING FLAT, WITH ENDLESS SEAS OF WHEAT, AND OTHER GRAINS, YET THERE IS A SECTION THAT IS HALF WAY

BETWEEN CHEYENNE WELLS AND SALINA WHERE THERE ARE VOLCANIC TRAILS, AND STREAMS, THE BADLANDS. AN UNUSUAL NATURAL OCCURRENCE SHOWING THAT THIS IS STILL PART OF THE CALDERA, THE GREAT VOLCANO UNDER THE WEST, THE SAME VOLCANO THAT FORMED YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, IN THE FALL POOLS CAN BE FOUND ALONG THE SALINA RIVER WHERE THERE ARE HOT SPRINGS LOADED WITH MINERALS. THE HOT SPRINGS OF KANSAS, ONLY KNOWN TO A FEW OF US HOBO'S AND A FEW TRIBAL AMERICANS, I'VE SPENT SEVERAL YEARS COMING BACK TO THIS LOCATION IN THE U.S. TO RENEW MY BODY, MIND, AND SOUL FROM ALL DIFFICULTIES OF MY LIFE. QUITE OFTEN IN LIFE PEOPLE TRIED TO MANIPULATE ME TO THEIR OWN DESIGNS AND DESIRES, AS IF THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO TURN ME INTO A PUPPET, CLEANING UP FROM THEIR MISTAKES, OR DOING THEIR DIRTY WORK. MANIPULATION, OVER THE YEARS PEOPLE HAVE TRIED TO MANIPULATE HOBO'S FOR THEIR OWN MEANS:

THE SALVATION ARMY DURING THEIR KETTLE AND BELL RINGER DRIVES AT CHRISTMAS TIME,

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OR THE LOCAL RESCUE MISSION, OR ANY HOMELESS ORGANIZATION. WHINING FOR FUNDING TO HELP THE POOR HOMELESS, "OH WE NEED HELP GETTING THESE POOR HOMELESS FOLKS OFF THE STREET" AND THEY RANT AND RAVE ABOUT HOW THEY'RE GOING TO HELP GET THEM JOBS AND MAKE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE BETTER. BUT WHEN THE DOG AND PONY SHOW IS OVER THE PEOPLE RANTING ARE GONE, THE MONEY THEY CAMPAIGNED FOR IS GONE, AND THOSE SAME HOMELESS THEY WERE CRYING FOR ARE STILL IN THE SAME DEPLORABLE LIFE AS ALWAYS. WHO POLICES THESE "FAKERS, AND CON ARTISTS?," HOW DO THEY GET AWAY WITH CREATING THE SCAMS THEY ENACT TO APPEAR HOLIER THAN GOD, ONLY TO DISAPPEAR WHEN THE MANUFACTURED PUBLIC WAILING EVENT IS OVER? BUT DO WE COMPLAIN?, NEVER! WE KNOW THIS WILL HAPPEN AGAIN, AS IT HAS SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL. AND SO WE LIVE OUR LIVES AND MOVE ON DOWN THE LINE, AND THESE CAMPAIGNER'S LEAVE TO FIND A NEW OBJECT TO USE TO RILE THE POPULATION UP, LIKE THE PASSAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE JESUS STATES "THE POOR YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE, BUT YOU WILL NOT ALWAYS HAVE ME WITH YOU!" - AAAAAAAAAAAHH S@#\$%&T!, PREACHING AGAIN!

I ARRIVED IN FARGO, THE REAL FARGO, NOT THE ONE ON THE T.V. SHOW. NOBODY THERE USES THE WORD "EH," OR "AY," WHEN THEY TALK, THAT'S HOLLYWOOD, THINKING THEY'RE SO CLOSE TO CANADA THAT THEY TALK LIKE CANADIANS, THE POWERS THAT BE IN HOLLYWOOD NEEDS A LARGE DOSE OF

REALITY! THE REALITY OF REALLY LIVING FOR A COMMON GOAL TO ENJOY LIFE, AND HELP YOUR FELLOW PEOPLE LIVE LIFE TO THEIR FULLEST WITHOUT SOMEONE TRYING TO MANIPULATE THEM, OR STICK THEIR HEAD UP YOUR ASS!

CHAPTER 14

CROSSING INTO MINNESOTA I FINALLY HIT THE PRAIRIE, PLUS WET SPONGY GROUND, AND WORST OF ALL - "MOSQUITOES" AS BIG AS F-16'S AND BADLY BITTING DEER FLIES, THESE WOULD EVEN TAKE CHUNKS OF FLESH WHEN THEY BIT YOU, CARNIVOROUS INSECTS, I KEPT WONDERING IF MINNESOTA HAD A FRANKENSTEIN LABORATORY FOR INSECTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA IN MINNEAPOLIS. EVERY BUG BITES HERE, BUT I FOUND THAT'S NOT THE CASE AT NIGHT WHEN THE BREEZES BLOW AND THE SMELL OF CLEAN AIR LIGHTLY SCENTED BY GARDENIA'S, VIOLETS, AND DOGWOOD PERMEATES AND COVERS THE ODOR OF MILLED GRAIN, DIESEL SMOKE, AND, MUSTY WET LANDS PLUS THE LAKES. OR PONDS, MINNESOTA IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE STATE OF 10,000 LAKES, BUT I FOUND THAT THEY HAVE A WEIRD IDEA OF WHAT A LAKE IS SUPPOSED TO BE, TO THEM ANY POOL OF STANDING WATER IS A LAKE. THIS WAS EVIDENT AFTER AN INTERCHANGE WAS BUILT ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS ON U.S. 18 WITH THE NORTH EXPRESSWAY, AFTER COMPLETING THE INTERCHANGE, COMPLETE WITH CLOVERLEAFS, THE MINNESOTA D.O.T. LAID DOWN A VINYL LAYER IN THE CENTER SECTIONS OF EACH CLOVERLEAF. FILLED THEM WITH WATER, AND CALLED THEM INTERCHANGE LAKES A, B, C, & D. OTHERWISE I ENJOYED HONEY BEES BUZZING THROUGH THE STRONG HIGH COTTONWOOD TREES STANDING FIRM AGAINST THE WIND LIKE THE SENTINELS OF THE TROJAN, AND GREEK HOT GATES THAT CAUSED THE PERSIANS TO STOP THEIR ADVANCE IN THAT WAR, THE ONE THAT THE MOVIE 300 WAS CREATED TO DEPICT. THIS IS THE STATE OF VIKINGS, AND WARRIOR'S, MANY HAVE JOINED THE RANKS OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLERS, OFTEN JOKED ABOUT MERCILESSLY, BUT IN REALITY THE SUPERHEROES OF OUR MODERN DAY AND AGE, THIS IS ALSO THE STATE OF RAILROADS, AND RIVER BOATS, GRAIN ELEVATORS, FLOUR MILLS, CEREAL COMPANIES, AND BEER BREWERIES.

ALSO THE LAND OF KINGS OF THE HOBO'S, AND QUEEN'S OF THE HOBO'S, AND A CEMETERY THAT HOLDS THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF AN UNKNOWN HOBO, DISCOVERED BY UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD IN 2003, THIS HOBO WAS FOUND FROZEN TO DEATH IN A BOXCAR IN ELMHURST YARD. THE COOK

COUNTY SHERIFF SENT HIS BODY TO THE COUNTY MORGUE, AND A SHORT EULOGY WAS PRINTED IN THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, KING OF THE HOBO'S - AD MAN, A PARTNER IN A BRAND MARKETING AGENCY WITH HIS WIFE DOREEN, OR DORI AS HE LIKED TO CALL HER AND SHE CALLED HERSELF, READ THE EULOGY AND BEGAN CALLING THE COOK COUNTY SHERIFF TO TRY AND IDENTIFY HIM. HE PRINTED UP FLYERS AND POSTED THEM ALL OVER CHICAGO, AS WELL AS MINNESOTA.

ONE YEAR, I TRAVELED WITH HIM OUT OF CHICAGO (AFTER ATTENDING A HOBO POETRY AND MUSIC FESTIVAL) THROUGH ROCHELLE ILLINOIS AND HELPED HIM POST THE FLYERS IN EVERY PLACE WE FELT HOBO'S MIGHT CONGREGATE, ALSO ALERTING ANYBODY WHO MIGHT AID IN FIGURING OUT HIS IDENTITY, BUT BY 2006 ALL HIS EFFORTS CAME TO NAUGHT. SO AD MAN CONTACTED THE AUTHORITIES GETTING THE UNKNOWN HOBO'S BODY RELEASED, THEN BROUGHT HIM BACK TO MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA TO BE BURIED IN A LOCAL CEMETERY, WITH A HOMEMADE CEMENT HEADSTONE ENTITLED THE UNKNOWN HOBO. SIMILAR TO THE MARKER AT BRITT IOWA IN THE NATIONAL HOBO CEMETERY, EVERY YEAR, THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE YEAR AD MAN ATTEMPTED TO DISCOVER THE IDENTITY OF THE UNKNOWN HOBO MUCH TO HIS CHAGRIN, BUT ALWAYS STATED "WE CONSIDER IT OUR JOB TO FIND OUT HIS IDENTITY, HIS NAME, AND WE'LL CONTINUE BECAUSE TO US EVERYONE MATTERS!" SUPERHEROES, AND AD MAN WAS ONE OF THEM, AD MAN "CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND" IN 2011, 1/3RD OF HIS ASHES WERE BURIED IN MINNEAPOLIS, 1/3RD OF HIS ASHES WERE BURIED IN THE NATIONAL HOBO CEMETERY, BUT THE REST OF HIS ASHES WERE SCATTERED AROUND THE COUNTRY ON FREIGHT TRAINS BY HIS DAUGHTER - ROSE OF SHARON, ALSO A SUPERHERO!

IN STAPLES THERE IS SOME PROPERTY ALONG SIDE THE B.N.S.F. YARD, IT WAS CALLED "THE RANCH" WHERE HOBO'S AND MILITARY VETERANS GATHERED EVERY YEAR FOR A 4TH OF JULY VETERAN/HOBO CELEBRATION, ORGANIZED BY THE "BOXCAR BOYS," KING OF THE HOBO'S - DANTE FUCWHA, KING OF THE HOBO'S - PREACHER STEVE, AND SPACE MAN JOHN. DANTE AND PREACHER WERE BOTH FRIENDS OF MINE IN LATER YEARS, BOTH WERE VIET NAM VETERANS, AND HOBO'S, WELL TRAVELED, AND WELL SEASONED, AND ALTHOUGH THEIR MILITARY CAREERS HAD THEM IN VIOLENT CONFLICTS AND UTILIZED THEIR COMBAT TRAINING TO THE FULLEST, AS HOBO'S THEY WERE SOFT SPOKEN, AND NON-THREATENING TO ANYONE THEY MET OR TRAVELED WITH. PREACHER STEVE CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND IN 2010 FROM A HEART

ATTACK, DANTE CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND IN 2020, THE VICTIM OF AGENT ORANGE COUPLED WITH THE EARLY STAGES OF COVID-19!, BOTH ARE BURIED IN THE NATIONAL HOBO CEMETERY IN BRITT IOWA.

MINNEAPOLIS JEWEL IS A 4 TIME QUEEN OF THE HOBO'S, SHE AND HER DAUGHTER MOVED TO THE HOUSE JEWEL STILL LIVES IN AT NORTHTOWN, WHAT WAS THE ENGINE HOUSE OF THE GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD, IF YOU LOOK FROM THE KITCHEN WINDOW AT HER HOUSE YOU CAN SEE TRAINS ROLLING BY. B.N.S.F, AND C.P, TRAIN AFTER TRAIN, JEWELS 1ST ATTEMPT AT RIDING A FREIGHT TRAIN ENDED IN DISASTER, SHE AND COME ON PAT WANTED TO RIDE A FREIGHT TRAIN TO THE NATIONAL HOBO CONVENTION SO THEY WENT TO DAYTONS BLUFF YARD TO CATCH A B.N. DOWN TO LA CROSSE WISCONSIN AND THEN CATCH A SOO TO BRITT. THAT WAS THE INTENTION, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT, THEY GOT TO ONALASKA WISCONSIN AND WERE THROWN OFF BY THE COUNTY SHERIFF, THEY HITCH HIKE, OR RATHER WALKED (HITCH HIKING IS ILLEGAL IN WISCONSIN) AND GOT TO LA CROSSE. BY THAT TIME THE HOBO CONVENTION WAS OVER WITH. BUT IT DIDN'T DETER JEWEL, SHE'S DRIVEN TO BRITT EVERY YEAR SINCE THAT TIME, THAT'S NOT TO SAY THAT SHE NEVER RODE FREIGHT TRAINS, JEWEL RODE WITH IOWA BLACKIE ACROSS IOWA WHILE SHE WAS A 3RD TIME QUEEN OF THE HOBO'S, HER FRIENDSHIP WITH BLACKIE SOURED WHEN HE BECAME OBSESSED WITH HER, IOWA BLACKIE LATER BECAME KING OF THE HOBO'S, MINNEAPOLIS JEWEL ALSO RODE WITH NEW YORK RON - CROWN PRINCE OF THE HOBO'S - ACROSS THE HIGHLINE (IT WAS B.N. BUT NOW IT'S B.N.S.F.) AND THAT TRIP HELD ENOUGH ADVENTURES TO LAST 4 LIFETIMES. MORE ADVENTURES THAN ARE IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, MORE ADVENTURES THAN HOLLYWOOD AND BOLLYWOOD PUT TOGETHER CAN CREATE!

AND I BECAME FAMILY WITH ALL OF THEM, AND THEY ARE MY FAMILY WHO I LOVE AND CHERISH, BUT MINNEAPOLIS (OR MINNIEHOPELESS AS BOTH IOWA BLACKIE AND I CALL IT) IS TOO BIG OF A CITY, OR AT THE TIME IT FELT THAT WAY. MAKING MY WAY THROUGH "STINKY TOWN" (ACTUALLY IT'S DINKY TOWN, A UNIVERSITY AREA THAT IOWA BLACKIE NICKNAMED) I BEGAN RUNNING INTO MASSES OF PEOPLE ALMOST HERDS, I REMEMBER SEEING SUCH A MOVING CONGREGATION IN HISTORICAL MOVIES, BUT HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED IT IN PERSON. I STOOD BY THE RIVER BANK WATCHING THIS IMMENSE THROG AND FELT THAT I COULD NEVER LIVE THIS WAY. EVEN NOW I SHUDDER AT THE MEMORY, A PERSON WOULD SUFFOCATE FROM BEING

NEAR THAT MANY PEOPLE PACKED TOGETHER, AND I NEEDED TO BE BACK IN THE OPEN SPACES, I GUESS BEING A CITIZEN WAS NOT FOR ME!

AT LEAST NOT AT THAT TIME, SO FOR ME TO BEST IDEA WAS "ROLL OUT" AND GET AS FAR DOWN THE LINE AS I COULD, GET BACK TO NATURE, RIDE THROUGH SOME WOODS, OR WOODLANDS, AND THAT MEANT GOING TO ST. PAUL TO RIDE THE MILWAUKEE ROAD SOUTH ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. SO I GOT ONTO A CITY BUS AND RODE TO ST. PAUL, THEN WALKED TO PIGS EYE YARD AND WAITED AT A CAR PARKING LOT FOR COMMUTERS WATCHING THE BUILD UP OF THE SOUTHBOUND TO DAVENPORT, THIS MEANT, ONCE AGAIN FIGHTING THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL AIR FORCE. AND FOR SEVERAL HOURS I SLAPPED ON DEET, PURE, FROM THE VIETNAM ERA, THE ONLY WAY TO FIGHT THEM OFF, BUT I SPIED MY TRAIN AND THE CAR I WANTED TO RIDE, WE CALL IT AN "APARTMENT GRAINER," IT HAS A SHEET METAL BACK PORCH. A LIP COMING UP THE BACK END, AND WALLS GOING UP THE SIDES, IT STILL SUCKS A BREEZE TO KEEP BUGS OFF, BUT ALSO KEEPS THE RAIN OFF. I THEN MADE MY WAY ACROSS THE HIGHWAY TO THE YARD AND CLIMBED ON BOARD WHILE THE MILWAUKEE ROAD WAS CREEPING OUT TOWARDS RED WING, AND EVENTUALLY THE RIVER. FINALLY IN THE DARK OF NIGHT I ENJOYED HEADING OUT FOR A NEW HORIZON. DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI, COOL AND CRISP AT NIGHT, THE MOISTURE OF THE TREES, BLUFFS, AND THE RIVER LULLING ME BACK INTO THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE WOODS THAT THE TRAIN RUNS THROUGH, HEARING FROGS CROAKING, THE RIVER LAPPING THE SHORE, AND VOICES. YES VOICES ON THE WIND, SOME SAY GHOSTS, BUT THEY WERE MORE LIKE FAMILY FROM THE PAST TELLING ME OF THE SOUTHBOUND I WAS TRAVELING ON, NOT JUST THE RAILS BUT THE LIFE I WOULD JOURNEY THROUGH, AND AS I ROLLED DOWN THE RIVER THE VISION OF MY FUTURE WAS CLEAR. I WOULD SPEND MY LIFE RIDING UPON THE BACK OF THIS STEEL BEAST, WITH IT ALLOWING ME TO RIDE TO MY DESTINY, WHATEVER THAT MAY BE.

AS WE ROLLED DOWN THE LINE WATER WOULD SHOOT UP BESIDE THE TRAIN, LITTLE GEYSERS FROM A SATURATED ROADBED AS TIES COMPRESSED WHEN THE CAR'S RAN ACROSS THEM, WHO NEEDS YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK WHEN I HAVE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER LINE? AND BESIDE US, ON THE RIVER, TUG BOATS, OR RATHER PUSH BOATS PLYING THEIR TRADE, PUSHING LONG STRINGS OF BARGES FILLED TO OVERFLOWING WITH GRAVEL, COAL, OR GRAIN, LIKE FREIGHT TRAINS ON THE WATER, MANAGED BY CREWS THAT CONSTANTLY CARE-TAKE THEM, JUST LIKE A HOBBO CARES FOR THE RIDE HE'S ON WHEN RIDING A

FREIGHT TRAIN. I'VE TALKED WITH THESE MEN AND THEY TOLD ME TALES OF DODGING PLEASURE CRAFT THAT DON'T CARE IF THEY GET RUN OVER BY ANOTHER LARGER CRAFT, SIMILAR TO THE FOOLS THESE DAYS THAT WALK ALONG LOOKING DOWN AT A 45° ANGLE AT THE SMART PHONE GROWING OUT OF THEIR HANDS, NOT WATCHING WHERE THEY ARE GOING. I GET SO DISGUSTED WITH THEM, "PUT THE G@#\$\$&\$@D PHONE DOWN, THE INTERNET WILL BE THERE WHEN YOU GET HOME." WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING, AND WHO, OR WHAT YOU RUN INTO, PAY ATTENTION, THINK, USE YOUR BRAIN, THIS'LL GUIDE YOU BETTER THAN ROLLING AIMLESSLY ALONG, I NEVER DID THAT IN MY LIFE, I ALWAYS HAD A PLAN, A DIRECTION WHEN I WAS ON THE ROAD.

THE RIVERMEN TOLD ME ABOUT SEEING LIGHTS COMING FROM THE WATER WHERE THERE IS ONLY WATER, NOTHING ELSE, ABOUT ABANDONED TOWNS THAT WERE HAUNTED, IN THE DAY THEY WERE EMPTY BUT AT NIGHT THEY WERE FILLED WITH GHOSTS, LIGHTS, AND DISEMBODIED VOICES. THEY TOLD ME ABOUT SEEING STERNWHEELERS THAT DIDN'T EXIST, AND PUSHBOATS THAT WERE AHEAD OF THEM THAT THEY ALMOST CAUGHT UP TO, BUT WHEN THEY ROUNDED THE BEND NOTHING WAS THERE, NO PUSHBOAT, NO BARGES, NOTHING. THEY TOLD ME OF GHOSTLY STERNWHEELERS, AND SIDEWHEELERS THAT WOULD DISAPPEAR IN FRONT OF THEM, WHIRLPOOLS IN THE RIVER THAT WOULD CAUSE THEIR GUAGES, RADIOS, AND CELLPHONES NOT TO WORK, AND I WONDERED ABOUT THE STRANGE WORLD THAT WE LIVE IN, HOW DOES ONE EXPLAIN THIS GROUP OF INCIDENTS TO PEOPLE WHO ONLY RELY ON THE INTERNET?

BUT IT'S NOT JUST ON THE RIVER, SPIRITUAL INCIDENTS, GHOST TRAINS, MANIFESTATIONS, AND BIZZARE NATURAL OCCOURANCES ABOUND IN THIS COUNTRY, WHILE TRAVELING THROUGH MONTANA BEFORE JOINING THE ARMY IN 1977, I HAPPENED TO BE IN LIBBY MONTANA AND WENT TO SEE THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE OF MONTANA. PONDEROSA PINES GREW WITH THEIR TREE TOPS POINTED TOWARDS THE CENTER OF THE ZONE, WATER FLOWED UPHILL, AND TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE ZONE, MOSS USUALLY GROWS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF A TREE BUT HERE IT GROWS ON THE SIDE OF THE TREE FACING THE ZONE. ELECTRONICS DON'T WORK, EVEN WIND UP CLOCKS AND WIND-UP WATCHES WON'T WORK, AND IN THE CENTER OF THE ZONE IS A LAKE THAT GLOWS AT NIGHT, THE LEGEND OF THIS LAKE IS THAT A TRIBAL MEMBER PLACED A CURSE ON THE LAKE. UPSET THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BROKE

THE TREATY WITH CHEIF JOSEPH OF THE NEZ PERCE HE CURSED THE LAKE TO CONFOUND WHAT EVER WHITE MAN THAT ENTERS THE AREA, DAMN IF THAT'S NOT TRUE! AND THIS IS STILL A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY, IT'S NO WONDER WHY TRIBAL AMERICANS WANT TO RETURN THIS COUNTRY TO ITS NATURAL STATE, BUT TO BE A PART OF THE 21ST CENTURY YOU NEED RAILROADS AND HIGHWAYS. WELL THEY HAVE THOSE ALREADY, AND YOU DON'T NEED ANY MORE, JUST REBUILD THEM TO HANDLE THE FREIGHT MOVEMENT IN AND OUT OF THE STATE, GIVE THE LAND OF THE RESERVATIONS TO THE TRIBAL AMERICANS, THE ORIGINAL TRIBAL MEMBERS HAVE PAID THE PRICE FOR WHAT EVER SUPPOSED TRANSGRESSION THAT WAS COMMITTED, WHY SHOULD THEIR DESCENDANTS CONTINUE TO PAY WHEN THERE'S NO NEED? SET UP THESE FAMILIES IN A BUSINESS OF THEIR CHOICE SO THEY WON'T HAVE TO GET MONEY DOLED OUT IN SMALL INCREMENTS BY A SOMETIMES CORRUPT TRIBAL COUNCIL, KEEP THE CULTURE OF THE TRIBES ALIVE WITH MUSEUMS, AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS BECAUSE IT IS WHAT EVOLVED INTO THE AMERICAN CULTURE. AND PROTECT THE MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT RENEWS OUR AIR AND WATER, AND BRINGS THE TOURISTS TO SPEND MILLIONS, IF NOT BILLIONS OF DOLLARS, NOT THE FLASH TRASH OF THE BIG CITIES, AND IT PRESERVES THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THIS LAND!

CHAPTER

**DAMMITOL,
PREACHING
MADE A
PROMISE
START
UNTIL I
ORDAINED,
WAS I?, OH
ON THE
ROAD I
THE SOGGY
AND THE
DIPPING,
TRAIN ROCK
TO SIDE
IN ROUGH
THE TIES
DEPRESSING
WATER TO
UP AND**

**15**

**I STARTED
AGAIN! I
MENTAL
NEVER TO
PREACHING
WAS
SO WHERE
YEAH, OUT
MILWAUKEE
OBSERVED
ROADBED
TIES
MAKING THE
FROM SIDE
LIKE A SHIP
SEAS. THEN
STARTED
CAUSING
"GEYSER"
SPLASH THE**

**SIDES OF ANY CAR ON THE TRAIN, AND NOW I KNOW WHAT A SAILOR FEELS
LIKE RIDING A SHIP IN BAD WEATHER, PEOPLE HAVE ASKED ME TO TAKE THEM
ON A TRAIN RIDE. I'D LIKE TO TAKE THEM OUT ON THE MILWAUKEE ROAD, BUT**

THAT'S A DREAM, THE MILWAUKEE ROAD IS NO MORE HAVING CHANGED HANDS SEVERAL TIMES, FIRST BOUGHT BY THE SOO, THEN THE C.P, THEN IT WAS BOUGHT DENNIS WASHINGTON TO CREATE THE I.M.R.L. WHICH STOOD FOR IOWA MINNESOTA RAIL LINK, BUT REALIZE THE JOKSTERS THAT HOBO'S ARE. WE NICKNAMED IT - I AM REALLY LOST - BECAUSE OF IT'S ODDBALL OPERATIONS, AND DEAD ENDING IN TOWNS THAT IT HAD NO REASON TO STOP IN, SO BECAUSE I WAS HEADED SOUTH I RODE THE MILWAUKEE ROAD DOWN THE RIVER LINE THROUGH DUBUQUE, CLINTON, DAVENPORT, MUSCATINE, OTTUMWA, DOWN INTO KANSAS CITY. AND NOT WANTING TO STAY IN SUCH A LARGE TOWN (THE MEMORY OF THE CROWDS IN MINNIEHOPELESS WAS STILL PREVALENT) I CAUGHT KEEPS CRUISING SLOWLY (KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN) FURTHER SOUTH.

IN LOUISIANA I BEGAN SWEATING INCESSANTLY, HUMIDITY COUPLED WITH HIGH HEAT TAKES A LOT OF GETTING USED TO, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S A CONSTANT CONDITION EXPERIENCED EVERY DAY, THE PEOPLE BORN HERE DON'T SEEM TO MIND, BUT IT TOOK ME SEVERAL TRIPS BACK HERE FOR LONG PERIODS TO GET ACCLIMATED. THE PEOPLE ARE RICH IN HERITAGE AND CULTURE THAT THE REST OF THE WORLD TAKES FOR GRANTED, THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE CLOSE TO THE LAND I FELT MORE COMFORTABLE WITH BECAUSE THEY CAME FROM THE SAME AREA OF LIFE THAT I GREW UP IN. AND TO THEM HOBO'S ARE A NORMAL PART OF LIFE, WHEN THEY FOUND OUT WHO MY MOTHER WAS THEY TOLD ME I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING, THEY'D TAKE CARE OF MY NEEDS, BUT I TOLD THEM I'VE WORKED HARD ALL OF MY LIFE AND ALWAYS PAY MY WAY. THE CAJUNS SPOKE AMERICAN WITH AN INFLECTION OF ACADIAN, SORT OF A BASTARDIZATION OF FRENCH, AND THEY WERE MOST APPRECIATIVE AND WHEN I OFFERED TO WORK FOR MY DINNER THEY EMPLOYED ME. ONE FATHER OF A FAMILY THOUGHT THAT I WAS A TOURIST LOOKING FOR FUN AND WAS SURPRISED WHEN HE WAS READY TO END HIS WORK AND I WANTED TO KEEP GOING, I TOLD THIS MAN THAT I GREW UP WORKING FROM SUN UP TO SUN DOWN, AND IT WAS NOTHING FOR ME TO WORK AFTER DARK. A SURPRISE TO HIM THAT A 13 YEAR OLD WOULD BE SO INDUSTRIOUS, AND I FOUND THAT AFTER SHOWING THESE CAJUNS WHAT I WAS WILLING TO DO THAT I ENDED UP WITH THOUSANDS OF NEW FAMILY MEMBERS.

INCLUSIVENESS, NOW I ASK YOU, SHOULDN'T AMERICA, THE U.S. BE INCLUSIVE?, THIS IS THE IDEAL WE BASED OUR NATION AND NATIONAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ON!, INCLUSIVENESS MEANS TO INCLUDE,

AND OUR NATION HAS MANY PEOPLE TO INCLUDE TO MAKE IT MULTICULTURAL. BUT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WANTS TO BUILD A WALL AROUND US, BE EXCLUSIVE, AS IF THE UNITED STATES IS A COUNTRY CLUB FOR ONLY A SELECT FEW AND NOT THE WIDE VARIETY OF PEOPLE WHO GATHERED TOGETHER TO CREATE THIS NEW COUNTRY GOVERNED BY THE PEOPLE, ALL OF ITS CITIZENS.

CHAPTER 16

BUT THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAS WORKED AS OF LATE, WITH BORDER WALLS, OR FENCES, THE UNITED STATES FEELS MORE LIKE POST WAR BERLIN WHEN RUSSIA

BUILT THE

WALL

OVERNIGHT,

WALL THAT

TORN DOWN

NATIONAL

THE SAME

WE SAW

ON

AND



INTERNATIONAL T.V. (CNN, Fox, BBC, ETC.) THIS IS WHY I PROMOTE THE

HOB0 NATION, OUR INCLUSIVENESS, TO GATHER TOGETHER EVERYONE THAT THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY REJECTS, AND IT IS WHY I CALL THEM MY FAMILY! SO ON ACROSS LOUISIANA (LOU-ZI-ANA, OR LOUSY-ANA AS SOME PEOPLE REFER TO IT) I SAT AT AN OVERPASS CROSSING, THE RAIL ROUTE OF THE K.C.S. THAT RUNS THROUGH SHREVEPORT, AND SAW THAT IT CLIMBS A HILL, SLOWING JUST ENOUGH FOR ME TO CATCH "ON THE FLY" SAFELY, ONE AFTERNOON, WHEN I HAD ENOUGH OF SHREVEPORT, WHEN MY "ITCHY FEET" RETURNED I SAT UNDER THE OVERPASS AND WAITED, IT TOOK ABOUT 3-4 HOURS BEFORE THE WHITE NOSE OF A KCS ENGINE APPEARED ON THE HORIZON. AND AS IT GOT NEAR THE THROATY SOUND OF THE DIESEL ENGINE AND THE WHINE OF THE TURBOCHARGER REACHED ME ON THIS HOT, LANGUID, SLEEPY AFTERNOON, I THEN QUICKLY PACKED UP MY GEAR AND WAITED UNTIL THE TRAIN SLOWED TO A CREEP, SPOTTING THE CAR I WANTED, CLIMBED ON BOARD, AND SETTLED IN FOR A NEW ADVENTURE. ROLLING THROUGH SEVERAL CROSSINGS IN SHREVEPORT, AND INTO BOSSIER CITY ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE RED RIVER, AND AS THE TRAIN WENT THROUGH ALL THOSE CROSSINGS NOBODY SPOTTED ME, "JUST ANOTHER TRAIN," NO ONE SAW A HOB0 ON BOARD. THE TRAIN CARRIED ME ACROSS NORTHERN LOUISIANA (OR LOUSY-ANA, IF YOU PREFER) AND ACROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. INTO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, WITH A FURTHER DIRECTION I WOULD EVENTUALLY TRAVEL, ALABAMA, GEORGIA, ENDING AT THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

THIS IS THE REGION OF "THE BLUES" WITH PEOPLE SINGING ABOUT A HARD LIFE, PICKING COTTON, (AS I HAVE DONE) OR CUTTING SUGAR CANE, OR ANY MULTITUDE OF JOBS THAT WORKING PEOPLE DO TO MAKE LIVES IN THE BIG CITY EASIER, THIS IS ALSO THE REGION WHERE ROBERT JOHNSON SUPPOSEDLY SOLD HIS SOUL TO THE DEVIL AT THE CROSS ROADS. GETTING THE GIFT OF GUITAR MASTERY, AT LEAST FOR A SHORT TIME, IT WAS HERE THAT I ENJOYED THE "DEEP SOUTH" AND ALL IT HAS TO OFFER AND EXPERIENCE! I ROMANTICIZE THIS AREA OF THE UNITED STATES BUT, AS OPPOSED TO LOS ANGELES, PORTLAND, CHICAGO, NEW YORK CITY, WASHINGTON D.C, MIAMI, OR DALLAS/Ft. WORTH, THIS PART OF THE NATION IS (TO ME) THE MOST WELCOMING AND ENJOYABLE JEWEL THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS TO EXPERIENCE. AND OFFER TO THE WORLD, WHY KEEP IT A SECRET?, WHY NOT SHOW THE BEST WE HAVE AS A COUNTRY TO THE WORLD?, WITH INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE THAT CAME FROM THIS SECTION OF AMERICA LIKE MARTIN LUTHER KING, WHO DEFIED THE OLD RESTRICTIVE STANDARD TO MARCH FROM SELMA TO MONTGOMERY TO FIGHT FOR ALL AMERICANS CIVIL RIGHTS. JUST LIKE OUR FOUNDING FATHERS FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE TO MOVE HERE TO

ESCAPE TYRANNY IN THEIR BIRTH COUNTRIES, OR JAMES BROWN WHO SANG AND FOUGHT FOR SCHOOLS, AND BLUE COLLAR PEOPLES RIGHTS TO BE HEARD BY THE NATION. OR WILSON PICKETT WHO SANG ABOUT TRUE LIFE ROMANTICALLY, AND BLUNTLY TO WAKE UP THE REST OF AMERICA TO THE DAILY PROBLEMS THEY SHOULD FACE AS OPPOSED TO "SWEEPING IT UNDER THE CARPET"! JUST A FEW TO NAME, NOW LET ME GET BACK TO MY FIRST YEAR ON THE ROAD, AND THE RUMINATIONS REMEMBERING IT BRINGS UP.

CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER I COULD ENVISION OLD AND YOUNG CITIZENS OF THE LOCALE TAKING UP ARMS TO FIGHT A WAR FOR A POLITICIAN WHO PROMISED THIS WAR WOULD CHANGE THE IDEALS OF THE OPPOSING FORCES AND GOVERNMENT BEHIND THEM, BUT IN REALITY IT WAS THE POLITICIAN'S WAY OF SACRIFICING OTHER PEOPLE TO DIE SO THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO FIGHT THE WAR THEMSELVES. POLITICIANS LIKE THIS SHOULD BE FORCED INTO COMBAT AND NOT SEND PEOPLES FAMILY MEMBERS TO FIGHT AND DIE FOR THEIR PERSONAL "IDEAS AND IDEALS." I WALKED IN A CONFEDERATE CEMETERY AND SAW THAT THE PEOPLE BURIED HERE WERE JUST LIKE PEOPLE OF TODAY, SIMPLE FOLK OF ALL RACES WHO WANTED A BETTER WORLD FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN TO LIVE IN. THIS IS WHY I TELL FOLKS ABOUT THE HOBO NATION, HOW WE ARE INCLUSIVE, SOMETHING OUR PRESENT GOVERNMENT HAS FORGOTTEN, WE ARE INCLUSIVE TO EVERYBODY FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE, OR WHAT RACE THEY ARE A DECENDANT OF, BLACK, WHITE, PINK, PURPLE, BLUE OR GREEN! THIS IS THE INHERITANCE THAT WE OF THE HOBO NATION PASS ON TO OUR CITIZENS, THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER TO THE UNITED STATES, ANOTHER REASON TO SHED THE PRESENT POLITICS THEY EXPOUND, AND TRY OURS, IT WON'T HURT YOU TO BE INCLUSIVE, FOLLOW OUR EXAMPLE. THEN YOU WOULDN'T NEED TO IMPEACH YOUR PRESIDENTS, MEN LIKE RICHARD MILHOUSE NIXON, OR BILL CLINTON, OR THAT IDIOT DONALD JON TRUMP, NO ONE REALIZES WHY HE HAS THE ASININE ATTITUDE THAT HE EXPOUNDS, BUT IT CAME FROM HIS GRANDFATHER.

THE FIRST DONALD TRUMP WAS A "49ER SALESMAN" WHO SUPPLIED ALL MANNER OF ITEMS THAT PROSPECTOR'S WOULD USE TO HEAD "WAY UP NORTH" (APOLOGIES TO JOHNNY HORTON WHO SANG THIS PART OF THE SONG NORTH TO ALASKA), THE MINERS ONLY SUPPLY STATIONS WERE PEOPLE LIKE DONALD TRUMP THE 1ST. HE BOUGHT SUPPLIES IN THE "LOWER 48" AND SOLD TO THE TRAVELING MINERS WHO FACED A LONG, DANGEROUS, AND

HARROWING JOURNEY TO ALASKA, DON SOLD MINERS EGGS AT \$1.00 A PIECE, TRULY GOUGING ECONOMICS FOR THAT DAY AND AGE. THEN HE SOLD HIS SUPPLY BUSINESS AND MOVED TO THE EAST COAST WHERE HE STARTED BUYING PROPERTY, SPECULATING ON THEIR VALUE, TRADING, SELLING, AND BUILDING BUILDINGS TO BE SOLD OR RENTED TO BUSINESSES, AND PEOPLE, MAKING HIS FORTUNE. HIS SON DONALD TRUMP THE 2ND INHERITED THIS FORTUNE AND BUILT IT INTO THE BILLION DOLLAR INHERITANCE THAT DONALD JON TRUMP BUILT UP FURTHER, ONLY TO GO BANKRUPT SEVERAL TIMES DURING HIS LIFETIME, AND "THIS IS THE GUY YOU ELECTED PRESIDENT!" SHAMEFUL!

AS OPPORTUNISTIC AS THE TRUMP FAMILY IS WE HAVE ONLY OURSELVES TO BLAME BECAUSE WE ALLOWED OUR GOVERNMENT TO ENACT THIS STYLE OF COMMERCE, WHEN THEY WERE ELECTED TO SERVE US, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND AND WE SHOULD HAVE RELIED ON OUR SOCIAL STRUCTURE, AND SOCIAL CULTURE TO DETERMINE IF THEY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LESS FORTUNATE, OR BE DRIVEN OUT OF OUR COUNTRY! HOW IS IT THAT THE HOBO NATION CAN RELY ON ITS INHERITANCE AND CULTURE TO HAVE PEACEFUL RELATIONS WITH OTHER PARTS OF SOCIETY, AND THE WORLD, BUT THE U.S. CAN NOT?

I TOOK MY TIME CROSSING THE DEEP SOUTH TO FIND OTHERS WHO SHARED MY UPBRINGING, MY WAY OF LIFE, MY INHERITANCE, WHO WERE HIDING OUT DOWN HERE, BUT ALSO TO MAKE FRIENDS, AND GAIN RESOURCES THAT MIGHT AID ME IN MY FUTURE DAYS, AND YEARS. RESOURCES THAT GIVE ME AN EDGE IN LIFE OTHER PEOPLE MIGHT NOT HAVE, FRIENDS BECOME FAMILY, THOSE WITH A LIKE MIND, IT'S MENTALITY, CULTURE, BEING A HOBO! OUR NATION CONTINUES TO TRAVEL, AND AT THAT TIME IT'S WHAT I DID, CROSSING THE MUSTARD FIELDS OF MISSISSIPPI, HARVESTING SUGAR CANE, SASAFRASS, AND COTTON, IN MISSISSIPPI, ALABAMA, AND GEORGIA, PEOPLE OF THE U.S. RELY ON THIS PRODUCT, BUT DON'T WANT TO HARVEST, AND PROCESS IT.

THEY'D RATHER ENJOY THE FINISHED PRODUCT AND LEAVE THE HARD WORK TO HOBO'S. BUT THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM TO US, LIFE LIVED IN THE OPEN GIVES AN APPRECIATION FOR THE FREEDOMS WE INHERIT, NO TIME SCHEDULES, NO EXPECTATION OF BEING ON TIME TO WORK A DEADEND JOB, FREEDOM TO PICK

UP AND GO WHERE WE WANT, LIVE LIFE ON OUR OWN TERMS. LEAVING MISSISSIPPI AND THE SUGAR CANE FIELDS BEHIND I RODE FROM ARTESIA INTO ALABAMA, ONCE AGAIN I RAN INTO SALT OF THE EARTH PEOPLE WHO INVITED ME TO THEIR HOME, LEAVING THE JUNGLE BEHIND, I TOLD THEM I APPRECIATED THE OFFER, BUT THE JUNGLE IS MY HOME! ALABAMA IS TRULY AMAZING AND MOUNTAINOUS, ALTHOUGH NOT THE MOUNTAINS THAT PERMEATE THE WESTERN UNITED STATES, NOR THE MOUNTAINS OF THE EASTERN UNITED STATES, THE APPALACHIANS, BUT DEFINITELY NOT FOOTHILLS. VOLCANIC ACTIVITY CREATED THIS REGION, MASSIVE LEAD, IRON, AND COAL DEPOSITS ABOUND, AND ARE HARVESTED BY FAMILIES, AND MINING CORPORATIONS, ALSO PEOPLE HERE ARE INVENTIVE, MAKING THEIR OWN LIQUOR, BEER, WINE, AND EXPORT THEIR STYLE OF COOKING ALL OVER THE WORLD. MUSICIANS COME FROM HERE, MANY MUSIC COMPANIES STARTED, AND STILL REMAIN HERE, RECORDING STUDIOS FROM THE EARLY 1900'S ARE LOCATED HERE. MUSCLE SHOALS STUDIOS IN FLORENCE ALABAMA IS STILL HERE, ORIGINALLY OWNED BY JERRY WEXLER, ONE OF 2 PRODUCERS THAT STARTED THE CAREER OF RAY CHARLES AT THE ATLANTIC RECORDING STUDIO IN NEW YORK, ALONG WITH HIS BUSINESS PARTNER AHMET ARTEGUN. SHIPPING IS DONE HERE ON THE GULF COAST, AND THE NAVY HAS A BASE ON THE GULF COAST ACROSS THE BAY FROM MOBILE, ALL THOUGHT OF, AND BUILT BY PEOPLE WHO STARTED OUT WITH NOTHING BUT AN IDEA, AND WORKED HARD LIKE OTHERS WHO WERE THE SALT OF THE EARTH TO SEE THEIR DREAMS REALIZED!

MANY HOBO'S THAT I KNEW WERE MILITARY MEN, MANY WERE ARMY, NAVY, MARINES, A FEW WERE AIR FORCE OR COAST GUARD, AND BECAUSE OF THESE MEN THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF HOBO'S TOOK ON AN ORDER TO OPERATE BY, THERE IS A KING OF THE HOBO'S, QUEEN OF THE HOBO'S, CROWN PRINCE, CROWN PRINCESS, GRAND DUKE, GRAND DUTCHESS, GREAT GRAND DUKE, GREAT GRAND DUTCHESS, GRAND HEAD PIPE, AND KNIGHT OF THE ROAD. WHY USE A MONARCHY TO REPRESENT OURSELVES?, THE HOBO'S WHO ORGANIZED THIS HIERARCHY WANTED TO IMPLICATE THAT WE ARE A SEPARATE NATION OPERATING WITHIN THE UNITED STATES, AND USING A MONARCHY TO REPRESENT US THEY COULD GAIN A POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP FOR TRADE, AND FINANCIAL AID THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE REFUSED IF WE REPRESENTED OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUAL HOBO'S AND PRIOR MILITARY. THE PROBLEMS OF THIS ASPECT IS STILL RELEVANT TODAY, AS IT WAS THEN, BUT AT THAT TIME A REPRESENTATION NEEDED TO BE CREATED, AND CREATE THE ORGANIZATION THE HOBO'S DID. DURING THE LATE 1800'S A LARGE GROUP OF HOBO'S FOUND THEMSELVES STRANDED ALONG SIDE THE BANKS OF THE OHIO RIVER,

THEY ALL FOUND THEY HAD SOMETHING IN COMMON, MANY OF THEM HAD BEEN KICKED OFF FREIGHT TRAINS AND OUT OF TRAIN YARDS DURING MANY TIMES OF THE YEAR DUE TO SOCIOECONOMIC REASONS, THESE ENTERPRISING HOBO'S REALIZED THERE NEEDED TO BE AN ORGANIZATION TO AID THE MIGRATORY WORKING HOBO. AN IDEA SPRANG UP DURING THIS IMPROMPTU GATHERING TO CREATE A UNION TO REPRESENT THESE WANDERING HOBO'S, THE GROUP DREW UP ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, AND RENTED AN OFFICE IN THE QUEENSGATE NEIGHBORHOOD OF CINCINNATI NEXT TO THE YARDS OF NORFOLK & WESTERN, AND BALTIMORE & OHIO. SEEING THAT THE NUMBER OF HOBO'S PRESENT TO CONFER AND CONFEDERATE NUMBERED AT 63 THE HOBO'S DECIDED TO CALL THIS UNION - TOURIST UNION #63, THE NEW DIRECTORS ORGANIZED THE MONARCHY THAT EXISTS TODAY WHICH IS REPEATEDLY CELEBRATED IN BRITT IOWA.

ORIGINALLY THE UNION WANTED A MORE POLITICAL STANCE TO CHANGE VAGRANCY LAWS THAT PERMEATED EACH MUNICIPALITY ACROSS THE NATION, THEY ENLISTED THE AID OF PUBLIC PERSONAS SUCH AS ACTOR ROBERT MITCHUM, NEWSPAPERS LIKE THE NEW YORK TIMES, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, THE ST. LOUIS DISPATCH, THEIR EXPLOITS AND PROBLEMS WERE FEATURED IN SHOWS LIKE PUBLIC DEFENDER, AND MOVIES LIKE WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD, AND DANGER LIGHTS. THE MEMBERS OF TOURIST UNION #63 HELD AN ANNUAL CONVENTION IN EVERY TOWN THAT ITS MEMBERS ORIGINATED FROM TO GIVE A MORE CONCISE IMAGE THAN WHAT WAS NORMALLY PUBLICIZED, THEIR CONTINUOUS ACT OF HOLDING A HOBO CONVENTION IN A DIFFERENT TOWN OR CITY EVENTUALLY BROUGHT THEM TO CHICAGO. DURING THE EARLY 1900'S THIS CITY WAS THE HOBO CAPITOL OF AMERICA, WITH HOBO RUN FLOP HOUSES, AND A PLACE TO FIND AVAILABLE WORK THIS WAS A HOBO'S PARADISE, EXCEPT FOR WINTER, IT WAS THEN THESE RAIL BOUND TOURISTS HEADED FOR SUNNIER, WARMER CLIMATES. IN THE YEAR 1899 THREE MEMBERS OF A SMALL TOWN IN NORTHWESTERN IOWA, BRITT, HEARD OF THE TOURIST UNION, AND ITS CONVENTION, WITH TOURISM ON THE WANE IN NORTHWEST IOWA THE 3 FOUNDING FATHERS OF BRITT IOWA SENT WORD TO ONION COTTON, THE GRAND HEADPIPE OF TOURIST UNION #63. THEY PROPOSED TO HIM THAT THEIR LITTLE TOWN COULD GIVE THE UNION A BETTER PLACE TO EXPOUND THEIR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, AND BE ANNUALLY CELEBRATED, RATHER THAN BE REVILED, ONION COTTON WENT TO BENSENVILLE YARD AND CAUGHT THE MILWAUKEE ROAD INTO BRITT, THESE 3 BRITT REPRESENTATIVES WINED, DINED, AND FINAGLED ONION COTTON WHO AGREED THAT TOURIST UNION #63 WOULD MOVE ITS HEADQUARTERS

PERMANENTLY TO BRITT. AND WITH A HOBO MONARCHY HAVING ITS HEADQUARTERS IN TOWN, THE ONLY ELECTED KING AND QUEEN IN THE UNITED STATES BRITT SECURED WHAT IT WANTED FOR THE HOBO'S AND ITS TOWN, NATIONAL AND WORLD WIDE PUBICITY! A FACT THAT CONTINUES INTO TODAY, WITH THE HOBO CONVENTION BEING BROADCAST LOCALLY, ON A.M. & F.M. RADIO STATIONS, ON NPR, BBC RADIO 4, CNN, FOX NEWS, OR YOUTUBE, REPOSITORIES FOR HOBO INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON INTERNET ARCHIVE, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, THE CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM IN THE CULTURAL HISTORY DEPARTMENT. CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY, AS WELL AS PRIVATE COLLECTIONS THAT AROUND THE UNITED STATES,

BILLY GIBBONS OF THE BAND Z.Z. TOP HAS ONE OF THE LARGEST PRIVATE COLLECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES! AT ONE TIME HOBO QUEEN - GYPSY MOON HELD THAT DISTINCTION, WHEN SHE DECIDED TO GO ON A HUMANITARIAN MISSION OF HER OWN DESIGN SHE SOLD HER ENTIRE COLLECTION TO MILWAUKEE MIKE WHO KEPT THE COLLECTION IN HIS ATTIC OF HIS HOME IN ELMHURST ILLINOIS. WHEN HIS HOUSE BURNED TO THE GROUND "THE COLLECTION WAS LOST TO THE 4 WINDS!" WITH THE COLLECTION OWNED BY BILLY GIBBONS BEING INACCESSIBLE THE ONLY ONE EVER ATTAINABLE WAS OWNED BY "LOCOMOTIVE LARRY" O'BRIANT, AN ANESTHESIOLOGIST WHO WORKED IN A LOCAL HOSPITAL IN AMORY MISSISSIPPI. BUT THAT HOBO COLLECTION IS NOW IN LIMBO, AND IS, TOO, UNATTAINABLE, WITH LARRY'S WIFE MISS CHARLOTTE, ALSO ANOTHER QUEEN OF THE HOBO'S, HAVING TO DEAL WITH LARRY HAVING CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND, AND ALL THE PROBLEMS THIS SITUATION ENTAILS, IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE WHY PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE SCRAMBLING TO FIND HOBO'S TO INTERVIEW TO HOLD ONTO THE INFORMATION FOR POSTERITY, MUCH THE WAY THAT ALAN LOMAX DID IN THE 1940'S, COLLECTING PHOTOGRAPHS, AND RECORDING SONGS, STORIES, HISTORIES, SERMONS, AND OTHER ARTIFACTS FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, A TIME CAPSULE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO LEARN, AND MEASURE THEIR PROGRESS BY!

NOW DON'T LET ME BURST YOUR BALLOON BY STATING THAT I DON'T BELIEVE IN SOMEONE BEING ELECTED KING OR QUEEN OF THE HOBO'S, YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY DECIDED TO TAKE YOUR NEXT VACATION IN BRITT, IF THAT IS YOUR

DESIRE BE ALL MEANS GO. BUT MY IDEA IS THAT IF ANYONE HAS DECIDED TO TAKE ON THE MATURITY OF LIVING HIS/HER LIFE IN THIS FASHION, LIVING THEIR LIFE IN THE OPEN, TRAVELING THE COUNTRY WHEN THEY GET ITCHY FEET, BEING THEIR OWN POLICE, NOT HAVING A TIME SCHEDULE OR TIME CLOCK TO PUNCH, OR A JOB TO ADHERE TO, AND HELPING PEOPLE USING THEIR INTELLIGENCE WHEN THE ONES THEY HELP HAVE NO INTELLIGENCE, THEN THEY ARE KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE HOBO'S IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. WITHOUT ALL THE GOBBLEDYGOOK THAT GOES ALONG WITH IT. (DAMN, DIDN'T KNOW GOBBLEDYGOOK WAS A REAL WORD!, FOUND OUT WHEN MY SPELL CHECK DIDN'T TRY TO CORRECT ME.)

AS I PROGRESSED INTO GEORGIA I RAN INTO MORE PEOPLE WHO KNEW MY MOTHER AND BIOLOGICAL FATHER TELLING ME THEY WORKED ON DIESEL TRUCKS WITH HIM, OR WENT TO HOSPITALS WHERE MOM WAS A NURSE, AND I REALIZED HOW WELL TRAVELED MY HOBO PARENTS WERE. AS I WALKED THE TRAIN TRACKS I BEGAN TO FEEL A KINSHIP WITH THE RAILROADS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES, MY FATHER MIGHT HAVE DRIVEN THESE SPIKES, OR HAMMERED THESE DATE NAILS. THEN THERE WERE THE MONIKERS!

CHAPTER 17

MONIKERS ARE WHAT HOBO'S USE TO TELL PEOPLE WHO THEY ARE, IT GOES BACK TO W.W.-2, WHEN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS WOULD WORK ON EQUIPMENT THEY'D LEAVE A DRAWING OF A BALDHEADED GUY LOOKING OVER A FENCE WITH A QUOTE UNDERNEATH THAT SAID "KILROY WAS HERE," KIND OF A TRADEMARK BUT FOR MILITARY MEN WHO WOULD OTHERWISE NEVER BE KNOWN. HOBO'S MONIKERS ALSO WENT BACK TO A 2ND DIRECTION OF LEAVING THEIR OWN CREATED HIEROGLYPHICS THEY'D LEAVE ON POSTS AND FENCES TO MARK THE HOMES AND BUSINESSES THAT WOULD GIVE A DECENT RECEPTION TO HOBO'S, AND THE PLACES TO AVOID. THE MONIKERS WERE A TRADEMARK FOR THE INDIVIDUAL HOBO TO USE, JUST LIKE THE NIKE TRADEMARK, OR THAT OF MRS. BUTTERWORTH, THE MANY MONIKERS THAT ABOUT THE UNITED STATES ARE A PHYSICAL DRAWING REPRESENTATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL, HIS OTHER PERSONALITY, ABILITIES TO OFFER, AND DESIRES OF ENJOYING THE FREEDOMS PROMISED BY A GOVERNMENT THAT MAKES

EMPTY PROMISES. WITH 1 MONIKER A HOBO CAN RELATE INFORMATION ABOUT WORK, RESOURCES, MEDICAL AID, FINANCES, ETC, BUT AS I RELATED EARLIER IN THIS BOOK IT ALL BEGAN WITH DOING NAME REPLACEMENT, HIEROGLYPHICS, AND DESIGNS TO PASS SENSITIVE INFORMATION FROM ONE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY TO A MILITARY POWER TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE AND END A WAR! SO MUCH FROM SO LITTLE THAT IS MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE GENERAL POPULACE, JUST AS WE HOBO'S ARE MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES THAT WE ARE A NATION WITHIN A NATION!

OUR MIGRATORY NATION STILL RUNS THE ENTIRE COUNTRY EXERCISING THE FREEDOMS THAT WERE PROMISED US IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS, NOT BEING LOCKED IN PLACE AS "BIG BROTHER" WANTS US TO DO. SO GETTING BACK ON THE RAILS WITH MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY, I GOT BACK ON THE RAILS TO EXPLORE THE STATE OF GEORGIA, ENJOY THE WARMTH OF NOT BEING IN SNOWY WINTER COUNTRY, AND EXAMINE A DIFFERENT WAY TO MAKE A LIVING, AND LEARN ABOUT THIS HOBO LIFE I INHERITED FROM MY NATION AND MY MOTHER. BEING A CITIZEN OF ANOTHER COUNTRY WAS SOMETHING THAT I EXPERIENCED BECAUSE IN REALITY I WAS A CITIZEN OF ANOTHER COUNTRY WITHIN ANOTHER COUNTRY, IT'S A BIZZARE IDEA, SHOULDN'T I HAVE DUAL CITIZENSHIP, I CALL MYSELF AMERICAN BUT I ALSO CALL MYSELF HOBO, AND THERE IS AN AMERICAN NATION, AND A HOBO NATION. BEING BORN INTO BOTH SHOULDN'T I HAVE DUAL-CITIZENSHIP? GEEEEEEZE, THIS'LL HAVE YOU GOING INSANE THINKING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A SITUATION, AND THE REALITY, BETTER TO LEAVE THIS TO THE PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS. I CAME ACROSS "BIG TEX," ANOTHER HOBO WHO I GOT TO KNOW WHO CARRIED A ROUNDED TIE PLATE AND RAILROAD SPIKE, HE HAD HAMMERED THE TIE PLATE INTO A MORTAR, AND USING THE ROUNDED END OF THE SPIKE HE CREATED A SOLID STEEL MORTAR AND PESTAL TO USE TO GRIND ANY DRY ITEMS OF FOOD, SEASONING OR BEVERAGE INTO A FINE GRIND (OR POWDER) TO USE AS A PART OF HIS MEALS, SIMILAR TO ANY FINE DINNING IN CITIES LIKE CHICAGO, OR NEW YORK, PARIS, MARSEILLES, OR LONDON, OR LOS ANGELES, OR MONTREAL, NOT EVERY CHEF CAME FROM CULINARY INSTITUTIONS, ANOTHER FACT OF LIFE THAT BIG BROTHER DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW.

TEX COULD TENDERIZE ANY MEAT AND TAKE IT FROM A TOUGH STATE AND MAKE IT TENDER ENOUGH TO CUT IT WITH A SINGLE FORK, CREATING A SAVORY MEAL THAT WOULD NORMALLY BE THOUGHT OF AS BEING SERVED IN ANY FINE DINING ESTABLISHMENT. HIS EXPERIENCE IN CHEF MASTERY, LEARNED FROM

LIFE ON THE RAILS, HE COULD TURN ANY STOCK HE CREATED FROM HIS MEALS INTO A GRAVY, OR A SAUCE INTO A MASTERPIECE THAT WOULD BOGGLE THE IMAGINATION TO WHERE PEOPLE WOULD ASK "HOW DID YOU DO THAT?" BIZZARE! CRAZY WALTER WAS ANOTHER HOBO FAMILY MEMBER WHO WAS A MASTER AT HIS CRAFT, WALTER WAS THE KIND WHO WOULD TINKER WITH MECHANICAL ITEMS, AND DISCERN HOW THEY WORK, HE WOULD MEMORIZE WHAT EACH PART WAS, HOW IT LOOKED, WHERE IT WAS POSITIONED, HOW IT AFFECTED THE OTHER PARTS IN THE MACHINE, WHAT THE FINAL OUT PUT OF THE MACHINE HE WAS WORKING ON WAS SUPPOSED TO BE. ALL FROM MEMORY, THIS IS WHAT I HARP AT PEOPLE ABOUT ALL THE TIME, THINK, USE YOUR BRAIN, USE YOUR MEMORY, INCREASE YOUR INTELLIGENCE!

WHY IS IT THAT NO ONE USES THEIR GIFTS OF INVENTIVENESS, GIFTS THE THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD GAVE THEM TO BETTER THEMSELVES AND THOSE THEY LIVE AROUND? AND THEN THERE'S THE AESTHETIC PLEASURE SEEING SCENERY, WOODLANDS, FIELDS, MOUNTAINS, WIDE RIVERS, DISTANT HORIZONS, SUNSETS, SUNRISES, HEAVY AND DARK STORMS, LIGHTENING, HEARING THUNDER, EVERY VISION THAT WOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF JOHN FORD MOVIES, OR THE VISION OF EPISODES FROM THE PARAMOUNT T.V. SHOW YELLOWSTONE! THE SCENERY AND SCENIC BACKDROPS THAT INSPIRE PEOPLE TO DREAM, WRITE, IMAGINE, CREATE STORIES, IMAGINE SUBJECTS THEY CAN PUT INTO WORDS SO THAT PEOPLE WILL TURN OFF THE T.V, TURN OFF THE INTERNET, SIT DOWN AND OPEN A BOOK, READ THE WORDS ON EACH PAGE, AND ESCAPE INTO ANOTHER WORLD, TAKING THEM AWAY FROM THE PROBLEMS OF THEIR LIVES, AND PUT THEM AT PEACE!

I GRIPE TO PEOPLE I WORK WITH DAILY THAT THE YOUNG AND OLD DON'T THINK ANYMORE, AND EVIDENCE POINTS TO HOW TRUE THIS IS, PEOPLE ARE INSTRUCTED HOW TO PERFORM A CERTAIN ACT, OPERATION, OR ACTIVITY, BUT THEY ONLY ACT LIKE THEY'RE LISTENING. THEY WAIT UNTIL THE BOSS HAS LEFT THE BUSINESS AND DO AS THEY DAMN WELL PLEASE! A YOUNG CHEF ONCE TOLD ME "I SURE KNOW HOW TO MASQUERADE MY ACTIONS TO PLEASE THE BOSS," THEN LATER HE RELATED "I BELIEVE IN THE JOB," WELL IF YOU REALLY BELIEVED IN THE JOB YOU WOULDN'T PLAY MIND GAMES WITH YOUR EMPLOYER! BUT THAT'S THE MENTALITY OF PEOPLE TODAY, THE SAME MENTALITY THAT EXISTED DURING MY YOUNGER YEARS, AND DURING THE DEPRESSION YEARS, ACT LIKE YOU'RE WORKING BUT DO NOTHING AND GET PAID FOR IT. THEN HIRE A HOBO, PAY THAT PERSON VERY LITTLE TO DO YOUR JOB, SEND THE PERSON

DOWN THE ROAD, AND YOU TAKE THE CREDIT, JUST LIKE THE C.I.A HAS DONE SINCE ITS CREATION IN W.W.2 AS THE O.S.S, PSYCHOLOGICAL MASQUERADING, AN ACTIVITY INVENTED BY HOBO'S. THOSE PEOPLE THAT OUR GOVERNMENT TRIES TO BRAINWASH YOU TO BELIEVE ARE AS "DUMB AS A BAG OF HAMMERS!" (DAMMIT, PREACHING AGAIN!)

OUT OF GEORGIA, ADVENTURE TRAVEL THROUGH "THE GREAT SOUTHERN FOREST" IN SOUTH AND NORTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA, WEST VIRGINIA, TENNESSEE, AND KENTUCKY, NO ONE COMES TO VISIT THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS ANYMORE, WITH DISAPPEARANCES ATTRIBUTED TO HILLBILLIES, MOONSHINERS, AND DRUGRUNNERS HIDING OUT IN THE APPALACHIANS KIDNAPPING HIKERS. THE PROPAGANDA OF MOVIES MADE IN HOLLYWOOD, LIKE "GATOR", OR "DELIVERANCE," (REMEMBER "SQUEAL LIKE A PIG?") IMAGINATIONS CREATED TO INDOCTRINATE, ARE PEOPLE REALLY THAT WEAK MINDED? WELL IF THEY ARE I GUESS IT'S UP TO HOBO'S, THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURERS TO FIND THE PERFECT ADVENTURE, GLORIOUS, SCENIC, AND SAFE TO ASAUAGE THE INDOCTRINATION THAT HAS REPLACED GOING ON A PERSONAL ADVENTURE WITHOUT THE INTIMIDATION OF A GOVERNMENT THAT HAS THE IDEA THAT THEY KNOW BETTER AS TO WHAT IS A REAL ADVENTURE!

WELL ON THAT NOTE I FELT IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE THE APPALACHIANS AND HEAD BACK TO THE WEST, MORE TO SEE, MORE TO EXPERIENCE, MORE TO LEARN, AND WITH THAT THOUGHT I MUST SAY THIS:

EVERYONE IS IN SCHOOL RIGHT NOW! YOU ONLY THOUGHT YOU LEFT SCHOOL WHEN YOU GRADUATED, BUT EVERY ONE OF US ARE IN SCHOOL, AND WE DON'T GRADUATE UNTIL WE CATCH THE WESTBOUND, WHAT SCHOOL IS THIS YOU ASK?, IT'S CALLED THE COLLEGE OF HARD KNOCKS! NOW DON'T ASK ME WHERE CAN I GET A PROFESSOR JOB, I AM A PROFESSOR, I AND OTHER PEOPLE WITH THE SAME BACKGROUND AND LIFESTYLE THAT I HAVE. OTHERWISE YOU'RE THE STUDENTS, AND WILL STAY AS THE STUDENTS UNTIL YOU GET TO BE MY AGE, ONLY THEN DO YOU GET TO BECOME PROFESSORS, IT'S AN INHERITANCE, PURE AND SIMPLE! BUT AT AGE 13, I WAS NOT A PROFESSOR, UNLESS YOU COUNT MY PROFESSING THAT I HAD MORE TO LEARN AND TRAVEL TO SEE! (A BIZZARE USE OF 2 INCARNATIONS OF THE WORD PROFESS DON'T YOU THINK?) THEREFORE IT WAS UP TO ME TO DECIDE HOW I WOULD TRAVEL BACK WEST TO RE-CROSS THE APPALACHIANS AND THE GREAT

PLAINS, THE LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE RAILROAD MIGHT BE EASIER TO CATCH OUT OF ATLANTA, GO NORTH TO CHATTANOOGA, THEN WEST TO NASHVILLE. BUT I STILL HAD TO GO THROUGH MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS OF WHICH I STILL REVEILED. THIS MEANT WALKING THROUGH "THE HOOD" AND ALL INNERCITY PORTIONS OF ATLANTA, BUT EVEN AT AGE 13, AFTER HAVING GROWN UP WITH HOBO'S I FELT NO FEAR.

AS I WALKED I WAS JOINED BY A YOUNG (AS I WAS) MAN WHO WANTED TO CATCH OUT TOO. WE HAD TO WALK AROUND THE ROADBED OF THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY, BECAUSE WALKING ACROSS IT, IF CAUGHT, MEANT 5 YEARS IN PRISON, AND A \$10,000.00 FINE. I ENJOYED MY FREEDOM VERY MUCH AND DIDN'T WANT TO CHANCE IT, BESIDES THE YOUNG MAN I HAD WITH ME WAS JUMPY, ACTING LIKE HE WANTED TO (AS I'VE SAID EARLIER IN THIS BOOK) USE THE TRAIN AS A REPLACEMENT FOR GOLDS GYM, NO FREAKING WAY! AND SO I DISTRACTED HIM BY POINTING OUT THINGS THAT HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SINCE HE GREW UP IN THE LOCATION, SEEING WE WERE CROSSING A FREIGHT LINE HE SHOULD KNOW THE DANGERS OF CROSSING STRINGS OF CARS ON A FREIGHT TRAIN.

"FIRST IF YOU'RE CROSSING BETWEEN CARS YOU HAVE TO BE ATTENTIVE TO ALL SOUNDS, ESPECIALLY IF THEY'RE COMING FROM THE TRAIN, AND HOLD ONTO ALL GRAB-IRONS FOR STABILITY, PLUS WATCH WHERE YOU PLACE YOUR FEET, THIS IS ALL IMPORTANT SUBJECTS TO REMEMBER. IF A TRAIN IS HISSING, IT MEANS IT HAS AIR PRESSURE RUNNING THROUGH THE LINES, AND THIS MEANS THE TRAIN IS LIVE, WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE YOU NEED TO LISTEN FOR SLAMMING SOUNDS,

- 1. A HISSING TRAIN CAN BE PARKED WITH NO CREW,**
- 2. HAVE A CREW THAT IS WAITING FOR ANOTHER TRAIN TO PASS BY,**
- 3. OR BE WAITING FOR ORDERS TO MOVE.**

IF THE 2ND ITEM IS THE CASE YOU NEED TO CROSS QUICKLY, A PASSING TRAIN RUNS AT 30 MPH AND WILL SUCK YOU OFF YOUR PERCH PULLING YOU UNDERNEATH IT WHERE YOU WILL BE RUN OVER QUICKLY LOOKING LIKE A COW AFTER MEAT PROCESSING. THIS SELLS T.V. TIME ON THE NEWS, BUT LEAVES YOUR FAMILY AGHAST, AND YOU DEAD,

IF THE 3RD IS THE CASE IT MEANS THE TRAIN MIGHT MOVE SOON, SO LISTEN FOR BANGING SOUNDS, IF YOU HEAR THEM IT MEANS THE TRAIN IS STARTING

TO LEAVE, (YOU CAN SAY DUUUUUHHHHH RIGHT NOW, BUT LISTEN TO THE REST OF THIS INFORMATION, YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID) A TRAIN PULLING OUT NEEDS TO USE ALL ITS SLACK ACTION. AS EACH CAR MOVES THE RESULTING INERTIA CAUSES THE NEXT CAR TO MOVE, THUS IN A SUCCESSIVE MANNER THE WHOLE TRAIN MOVES ATTEMPTING TO GATHER SPEED, THIS CAN EASILY THROW YOU OUT OF BALANCE BEING THROWN OFF, OR FALLING OFF AND UNDER THE TRAIN TO BE SLICED AND DICED.

ANOTHER THING MIGHT HAPPEN, AS THE TRAIN MOVES SLACK MIGHT COME BACK IN FROM THE REAR OF THE TRAIN, YOU NEED TO LISTEN FOR THIS, HOLD ON TIGHT AND WATCH WHERE YOU PLACE YOUR FEET, **DO NOT STEP ON THE KNUCKLES!** ONE OF YOUR FEET MAY SLIP BETWEEN THE KNUCKLES AND THE DRAW BAR, IF THIS HAPPENS YOUR FOOT WILL BE CRUSHED, THIS MEANS HOSPITAL TIME, DISABILITY. AND THE DISABILITY CLAIM WILL TAKE UP TO 3-4 YEARS TO PAY OUT, DO YOU REALLY WANT TO PANHANDLE WHILE WAITING THAT LONG ON A CLAIM?

THESE ARE THINGS YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT DOING THIS KIND OF ACTIVITY, DO THIS ENOUGH TIMES AND IT BECOMES **MUSCLE MEMORY, INSTINCT!**, THIS IS WHAT I DO, THIS IS WHAT I HAVE DONE, AND THIS IS WHY **HOBOS** SHOULD BE RESPECTED INSTEAD OF REVILED. WE KNOW THE SAFE WAY TO CROSS TRAINS, I ALSO POINTED OUT ALL THE **WILD STRAWBERRIES, AND WILD PEAS** THAT WERE READY TO BE PICKED, WE COLLECTED SEVERAL SMALL BAGS OF THEM AS WELL AS **FOX GRAPES, AND MULBERRIES**, OF WHICH WE ATE WHILE SEARCHING AND WAITING FOR A TRAIN ON THE **L&N RAILROAD** TO TAKE OFF.

CHAPTER 18

SO WAITING HERE WE FOUND A **SIDEDOOR PULLMAN (THIS IS A BOXCAR)**, AAAAAANNND WE GOT ON BOARD, AT THIS POINT HE STARTED IN WITH THE NORMAL QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAIN TRAVEL, I STOPPED HIM SAYING:

"FIRST OF ALL YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY, YOU'VE LIVED AROUND IT ALL YOUR LIFE. I'M JUST GOING TO REMIND YOU, IN FACT YOU'VE HAD TO DEAL WITH **POLICE ALL THE TIME**, WELL THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **CITY POLICE, AND RAILROAD POLICE** WITH ONE EXCEPTION, **CITY**

POLICE ARE PAID BY THE CITY, AND RAILROAD POLICE ARE PAID BY THE RAILROAD. BOTH HAVE THE SAME ARRESTING POWERS. EACH CAN GO ON THE OTHERS PROPERTY AND ENFORCE THE LAW, SO BEING OBVIOUS IS A NO-NO, THIS IS WHY WE ARE CAUTIOUS AROUND FREIGHT YARD AND TRY NOT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. ANY UNNECESSARY ATTENTION BRINGS THEM THINKING WE'RE UP TO NO GOOD, AND HOBOS ARE NOT VANDALS WE'RE MORE ATTENTIVE THAN ANYONE ELSE SEEING THIS IS OUR HOME AND RIDE, SO WE WATCH FOR BROKEN, OR PROBLEMATIC EQUIPMENT, WE MARK DOWN WHERE THIS PROBLEM IS AND WHERE IT'S LOCATED ON THE TRAIN AND CALL IT IN. THIS AIDS IN THE PROTECTION OF THE RIDE WE'RE ON, AND THE OPERATORS, AND EVEN THE LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD, MORE PROTECTIVE THAN THE POLICE, WHICH MEANS I'VE BEEN PROTECTING YOU FOR YEARS. IF YOU DO THIS ENOUGH IT BECOMES INSTINCT, AND FOLKS YOU LIVE AROUND WILL SEE YOU DO THIS AND SEE YOU CAN PROTECT THEM IN A WAY THAT NEITHER THE LOCAL GANG, NOR THE POLICE CAN.

SECOND: WE REALIZE THAT THIS TRAIN, OR ANY TRAIN IS AN UNFORGIVING PIECE OF STEEL, WE KEEP THIS IN MIND TO WHERE IT BECOMES INSTINCT, THIS AIDS US IN SELECTING THE RIGHT RIDE,

THIRD: WE OBSERVE THE BEST WAY TO HIDE WHILE RIDING SO AS TO NOT FALL OFF, OR INTERFERE WITH NORMAL TRAIN OPERATIONS. THIS MEANS WE ARE AN EXTRA TRAIN CREWMAN, AND IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY HELP GET THIS TRAIN TO THE NEXT DEPOT SAFELY SO THE RAILROAD CAN CHANGE THE CREWS, THUS WE GAIN FRESH BROTHERS WHO ARE OUR CHAUFFEURS, WE OBSERVE THE TRAINS CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS TO ENSURE THE COUNTRYSIDE IS NOT ENDANGERED BY OUR PASSAGE, AND WE TRAVEL EVERYWHERE BECAUSE:

IT IS WRITTEN IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS IN WASHINGTON D.C, THIS PART STATES: WE ARE PROMISED THE RIGHT TO FREE MOVEMENT WITHOUT BEING REQUIRED REGISTRATION, LICENCE, REGULATION, OR GRANTED MOVEMENT BY ANY AUTHORITY STATE, COUNTY, CITY, OR FEDERAL," THIS IS IN THE CONSTITUTION, SO REMEMBER WHEN YOU SAY YOU'VE LIVED HERE ALL YOUR LIFE ASK YOURSELF WHY? WHY DO YOU LIMIT YOURSELF TO JUST ONE TOWN OR CITY TO RESIDE, WHEN OUR FOUNDING FATHERS GAVE YOU THE ENTIRE UNITED STATES - IN EFFECT: ANYWHERE YOU LAY YOUR HAT IS YOUR HOME! NOW WITH THAT IN MIND WOULDN'T ALL THE BERRIES, ROOTS, PLANTS, AND ANIMALS BELONG TO YOU, BUT A SHARED OWNERSHIP WITH ALL AMERICANS, THE YOUNG MAN THOUGHT ON THIS FOR A MINUTE AND AGREED WITH ME. NOW I ASK YOU: (READER) WHY CAN'T YOU SEE THIS TOO? THEN THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE, THIS WAS THE CRITICAL MOMENT, AS LONG AS WE STAYED HID NO-

ONE WOULD SEE US, ESPECIALLY R.R. POLICE (ALSO CALLED THE BULL, PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY'RE FULL OF BULLSHIT!), AS LONG AS WE WEREN'T SEEN OUR CHAUFFEUR, THE RAILROAD, WOULD TAKE US ON AN ADVENTURE. WE ROLLED STEADILY PICKING UP SPEED TO 40 MPH, HEADING UPHILL OUT OF ATLANTA CLIMBING THE LOWER APPALACHIANS AND BEGAN THAT WONDERFUL TOUR OF FORESTS AND VALLEYS, LISTENING TO THE RATTLING OF OUR TRAIN CAR, AND THE SQUEAL OF THE WHEELS GRINDING AGAINST THE BALL OF THE RAILS. NOISE LIKE A SCREAMING BANSHEE, ECHOING THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS TO EXCLAIM ITS PRESENCE, TELLING NORTH GEORGIA "I'M COMING DOWN THE ROAD, GET OUT OF THE WAY, THERE'S NO HOLDING ME BACK."

THESE SQUEALS MAY BE NOISE TO SOME, BUT TO ME IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MUSIC ONE COULD LISTEN TO, JUST LIKE LISTENING TO VIVALDI, OR AMADEUS MOZART, OR FRANZ LIZST, OR LUCIANO PAVOROTTI, OR MS. ARETHA FRANKLIN! THEN LO AND BEHOLD WE ROUNDED A CURVE AS THE EVENING DREW ON AND FOR AN HOUR THIS YOUNG MAN AND I WERE TO WITNESS THE GRANDEST SUNSET SINCE THE WORLDS CREATION, AND WE WITNESSED THE CHANGE AS THE YELLOWS TURNED TO GOLD, THEN ORANGE, RUBY RED, LIGHT PURPLE, ROYAL PURPLE, INDIGO, AND FINALLY THE INKY BLACK OF NIGHT. THEN I HEARD A SIGH FROM THIS YOUNG MAN, AND STARS BEGAN TWINKLING IN THE SKY AS WE ROLLED ON TOWARDS CHATTANOOGA TENNESSEE, AND HE BEGAN TO RELATE TO ME HIS APPRECIATION FOR TAKING HIM ON THIS RIDE, SPEAKING AMERICAN PEPPERED WITH THE EBONICS HE USUALLY USED. IN EFFECT HE TOLD ME ALL HE EVER HAD SEEN WAS INNERCITY STREETS, DRUG DEALERS, PROSTITUTES, DIRTY "HOOD'S" AND POLICE HARASSMENT, BUT THIS WAS THE FIRST HE HAD EVER KNOWN PEACE, A PEACE THAT ONLY COMES AS A GIFT. WE FINALLY MADE IT TO CHATTANOOGA, BAILING FROM THE TRAIN WHEN IT STOPPED ON THE SIDE OF LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN TO THROW A SWITCH AND ENTER THE YARD, AND WALKED BACK TO TOWN, AS WE WALKED I TOLD HIM OF THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES I USUALLY USED, AND SHOWED HIM SEVERAL PLACES TO STAY AT. BUT ALSO I STATED "THERE ARE MANY HOBO JUNGLES ALONG THE RIVER, IF YOU FEEL THAT YOUR LIFE HERE CAUSES YOU TOO MUCH STRESS HEAD DOWN THERE, JUST REMEMBER TO SHOW THESE HOBO'S THE SAME RESPECT THAT I HAVE SHOWN YOU, IF YOU DO THIS YOU'LL HAVE FRIENDS FOR LIFE, WILLING TO TRAVEL 1000 MILES TO GIVE YOU HELP IF YOU ASK. THESE ARE THE SAME HOBO'S THAT I GREW UP WITH THAT CAMPED IN PROPERTY BEHIND WHERE I LIVED AS A CHILD, THE SAME THAT GAVE ME INSTRUCTION FOR LIVING LIKE I DO, AND THIS IS THE SAME INSTRUCTION I GIVE TO YOU, THE SAME ASSETS THAT IS MY INHERITANCE IS NOW YOURS, VALUE IT,

REMEMBER IT, SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE YOU MAY NEED THIS INHERITANCE TO AID YOU IN LIFE'S PROBLEMS, IT WILL, AND SO WILL THE HOBO'S YOU COME TO KNOW!"

YEARS LATER I WOULD COME BACK THROUGH CHATTANOOGA AND THIS YOUNG MAN WAS NOW QUITE OLDER, A PREACHER OF THE BIGGEST BAPTIST CHURCH IN CHATTANOOGA, MARRIED WITH 5 CHILDREN, HE AND HIS FAMILY WOULD AID THE HOBO'S CAMPED ON THE RIVER, NEVER ASKING THEM TO LEAVE THEIR LIFE BEHIND, LIKE SO MANY REVIVALIST PREACHERS HAVE DONE. HIS CHURCH WAS INCLUSIVE TO ANYONE, NO MATTER THEIR RACE, OR FINANCIAL STANDING, AND WE HOBO'S WERE WELCOME TO AN AFTER CHURCH BANQUET, HE TOLD ME THAT I INSPIRED HIM TO THIS LIFE, BEING A LINK FOR HOBO'S TO THE ASSETS IN THE CITY, AND GONE WAS THE EBONICS HE USED TO SPEAK, BUT JUST AS CONFUSING HE PREACHED IN THE HOBO LANGUAGE, WHICH, HE SAID, FRUSTRATED THE MANY SO-CALLED CIVILIZED OF CHATTANOOGA! HIS FIRST NAME WAS JASON, AND THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW, MANY PEOPLE I'VE KNOWN DIDN'T WANT SOMEONE TO KNOW THEIR LAST NAME FOR FEAR THAT PEOPLE WOULD SCAM THEIR RELATIVES, OR WORSE, ONLY ONE CAN IMAGINE, JASON TOLD ME OF SEVERAL VIETNAM VETERANS WHO CAME TO HIM BECAUSE OF THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH HOBO'S WHO CAMPED ON THE RIVER, THEY FIRST SOUGHT OUT PEOPLE WHO LIVED LIKE THEY DID DURING THEIR TIME IN THE 'NAM. FEELING THAT HOBO'S WOULD KNOW THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF THE LOCAL AREA, AND THE V.A. WASN'T DOING ANYTHING AT THAT TIME, SO A FELLOW "BUSH BROTHER" MIGHT HAVE SOME INSIGHT INTO BETTER AID THAN WHAT THEY EXPERIENCED AS OF LATE. IT WAS THOSE WHO JUNGLED ALONG THE RIVER WHO SENT THE VETS TO HIS CHURCH TELLING THEM THAT HE WAS SOLID, AND THEY WOULD GET BETTER HELP THROUGH SOMEONE WHO WORKS WITH HOBO'S, RATHER THAN GOING THROUGH A GOVERNMENT AGENCY. JASON GAVE THEM THE SUPPORT THAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR, AND THEY RESPONDED IN KIND, THESE VETS ORGANIZED A SHELTER FOR TRAVELERS, PAID FOR BY THEIR DISABILITY CHECKS, AND AGENT ORANGE CHECKS, JASON SAID HE WOULD FINANCE THEM IN HARD MONEY TIMES. AND THEY PITCHED INTO GIVING A BETTER IMAGE AND LIFE TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD THEY WERE A PART OF, THEN HE ASKED ME IF THERE WERE MANY VIETNAM VETERANS ON THE RAILS? I TOLD HIM OF THE HUNDREDS THAT I HAD MET WHILE TRAVELING THROUGH COLORADO INTO CALIFORNIA, AS WELL AS OREGON, AND WASHINGTON STATE, MOST OF THEM REFUSED TO JOIN WITH SOCIETY IN THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED WORLD, AND PREFERRED TO LIVE WITH HOBO'S, THEIR

REASON WAS WE PRESENT NO FALSE FRONT, AND TREATED EVERYONE AS A FAMILY MEMBER! (WHICH IS TRUE EVEN TODAY IN 2023)

CHAPTER 19

AFTER LEAVING THIS YOUNG MAN I HEADED BACK TO LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, AND THE L&N YARD, BUT BEFORE I LEFT I TOLD THIS YOUNG MAN "YOU KNOW I'M DOING YOU A SERVICE NOW, IF YOU FEEL LIKE REPAYING ME FIND SOMEONE WHO IS IN NEED OF THE SAME HELP AND GIVE AID TO THAT PERSON. THEN TELL THEM TO PASS THE FAVOR ALONG, IF YOU DO THIS YOU'LL FIND, AS I HAVE ALREADY FOUND, THAT SOMEONE WILL HELP YOU WHEN YOU REALLY NEED IT, BUT THE PAYMENT TO YOU WILL BE INCREASED 100 TIMES MORE, YOU SEE LIFE IS A CIRCLE, AND WHAT GOES AROUND - COMES AROUND! SOON I WAS BACK AT THE TRAIN YARD ON THE SIDE OF LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, WAITING AT THE SWITCH FOR A WESTBOUND HEADING FOR NASHVILLE, I WATCHED AS A L&N CABOOSE GOT NEARER, SOON A SWITCHMAN CLIMBED OFF TO THROW THE SWITCH SO THE TRAIN COULD BACK OUT ONTO THE MAINLINE. IT WAS NOW TIME TO "SCAN THE TRAIN" FOR A CAR TO RIDE "SIGHT UNSEEN" INTO KNOXVILLE, AND EVENTUALLY NASHVILLE, SPOTTING THE CAR TO RIDE (NO, I'M NOT TELLING YOU WHAT IT WAS, I'D RATHER CONTINUE WITH THE NARRATIVE) I CLIMBED ON BOARD AND SETTLED IN, SOON BECOMING A PART OF THE TRAIN. AND AS IT BEGAN TO MOVE WEST I PASSED BY THE SWITCHMAN WHO RODE THE CABOOSE WITH THE CONDUCTOR, HE WAVED SALUTING ME SAYING "ENJOY YOUR RIDE 'BO, WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING ONE OF YOU ON BOARD, YOU ARE A SIGN OF GOOD LUCK TO US, GIVING US A SIGN OF CONFIDENCE THAT WE WILL GET TO OUR DESTINATION WITHOUT A PROBLEM!" THIS WAS INSTRUCTED TO ME BY MANY OF THE OLDER HOBO'S WHEN I WAS STILL A KID IN LAMPASSAS AND THE SENTIMENT WAS ENFORCED THAT DAY, AS IT IS REVEALED DAILY TO ME AND OTHER YOUNGER HOBO'S.

CROSSING THE BRIDGE OVER THE TENNESSEE RIVER I ENJOYED, ONCE AGAIN, BEING BACK IN "GOD'S COUNTRY," BACK IN MOUNTAINS, AND FOOTHILLS WINDING THROUGH CANYONS AND GORGES, FILLED WITH BIRDS OF EVERY SPECIES KNOWN TO AMERICA, LIKE SWALLOWS, OR HUMMING BIRDS,

(PROBABLY CALLED THAT BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW THE WORDS) OR THE ONES MIGRATING THROUGH TO MEXICO. COOL BREEZES WASHED MY FACE AS I TRAVELED FURTHER WEST SCENTED WITH DOGWOOD, JASMINE, AND WILD ROSES, EVERY SCENT, EVERY SOUND, WAS LIKE A MUSICAL PLAY OR CONCERT OF WHICH I WAS THE ONLY PATRON, ME AND THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD! (DO I NEED TO EXPLAIN THE GOD THING AGAIN?) SOON THE SUN BEGAN TO SET AND I WAS, ONCE AGAIN, TREATED TO A GLORIOUS SIGHT, LIKE A PAINTING, BUT ONE NOT EVEN VAN GOGH, NOR RENOIR COULD IMAGINE, MUCH LESS PAINT. THE NIGHT RIDING WAS MOST PLEASANT GETTING COOLER AND COOLER, TO DOWN RIGHT COLD, BUT I COVERED UP WITH MY BEDROLL (WHICH AT THAT TIME WERE 2 PIANO MOVING PADS) AND SLEPT SOUNDLY INTO THE NIGHT ARRIVING IN KNOXVILLE AT 11:00 PM. THE WORLDS FAIRGROUNDS IN KNOXVILLE WAS LIT UP WITH A FOUNDERS CELEBRATION AND THE KNOXVILLE SPACE NEEDLE WAS MOST APPARENT, AND LOOKING AT IT I REALIZED THAT IT DID LOOK LIKE A SAUSAGE AND BISCUIT! (THERE WAS A JOKE GOING AROUND THAT THE DESIGN WAS SO POORLY MADE THAT THE OUTCOME APPEARED TO LOOK LIKE THIS SOUTHERN FOOD DELICACY)

WE ONLY WAITED AN HOUR GETTING A NEW CREW, THEN PULLED OUT FOR NASHVILLE WITH THE "KNOXVILLE SAUSAGE AND BISCUIT" FADING IN THE DISTANCE, AND I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO EAT AT THE LOCAL KRYSTAL, WHICH IS THE SOUTHERN VERSION OF WHITE CASTLE. OFF TO NASHVILLE STILL RUNNING THROUGH PINE FORESTS AND FOLLOWING STREAMS, AND ROLLING THROUGH VALLEYS, A CONTINUOUS ROLL AT 40 MPH, STEADY AND SMOOTH, RAILS SINGING, WHEELS WHINING, CONTINUOUS, ALL THE WAY INTO NASHVILLE, AT WHICH POINT THE TRAIN TURNED SOUTH HEADING TO SOUTH NASHVILLE, AND THE MAIN TRAIN YARD. I BAILED 100 YARDS SHORT OF THE TRAIN YARD, ON THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTHEONON, PRIVATE PROPERTY, SO EVEN THOUGH THE BULLS (RAILROAD POLICE) COULD SEE US, THEY COULDN'T TOUCH US. AND 4 BLOCKS AWAY WAS THE FAMOUS KRISPY KREME DOUGHNUT BAKERY, THIS WAS AN EARLY MORNING BREAKFAST STOP WHICH ALLOWED HOBO'S TO WORK FOR THEIR BREAKFAST, THIS WAS A DOUGHNUT BAKERY KITCHEN WHICH WOULD MAKE THOUSANDS OF PASTRIES TO BE DELIVERED TO 137 KRISPY KREME STORES IN AND AROUND NASHVILLE, AS WELL AS BUSINESSES THAT BOUGHT THE PASTRIES. OVER THE YEARS I'VE GOTTEN TO KNOW BOTH THE KITCHEN AND THE LOADING DOCK AT THIS BAKERY QUITE WELL, AND ONE SUMMER THEY PUT ME ON THE PAYROLL WHICH HAD ME DELIVERING TO THE L&N YARD, AND RAILROAD POLICE OFFICE, ONE OF THE FEW TIMES A HOBO COULD LEGALLY BE ON RAILROAD PROPERTY.

I'VE GOTTEN HEAVY STARES FROM THE YARDMASTER, DISPATCHER, AND RAILROAD POLICE WHEN I WAS DELIVERING DOUGHNUTS TO THEM BUT I TOOK IT IN STRIDE BECAUSE LATER THEY WOULD BE LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I WAS WAITING TO CATCH OUT. MEANWHILE BACK AT THE CATCHOUT/JUNGLE THE MEMBERS OF THE HOBO NATION HAD A YOUNG COUPLE AT THE FIRE CONFERRING AS TO WHAT HELP WE COULD GIVE THEM, OR WHAT SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY WE COULD CALL TO AID THEM IN THEIR PREDICAMENT, IT SEEMS THIS COUPLE, AFTER A QUESTIONING OF THEM (THAT SEEMED LIKE "POLICE GRILLING," BUT IN A PLEASANT WAY - WISH THE POLICE WOULD ADOPT THE EXAMPLE)! WE FOUND OUT THEY WERE DISPLACED AFTER A FLOOD WASHED THEIR HOME AWAY IN L.A. (LOWER ALABAMA) AND WERE IN NASHVILLE TO FIND RELIEF FOR THEIR FAMILY, SO THIS WAS OUR NEW TASK, OR QUEST, AND A GOOD REASON TO STAY IN NASHVILLE A FEW DAYS LONGER. WE FINALLY FIGURED OUT THE AGENCIES, AND BANKS THEY COULD GO TO FOR LOANS, HELPED THEM LOCATE A HOUSE, BUY FURNISHINGS, AND MOVE IN, IN EFFECT WE SHOWED THEM WHAT NEIGHBORS REALLY ARE! AND THAT'S THE WAY I WAS RAISED, TO BE A NEIGHBOR EVEN IF YOU DON'T LIVE ANYWHERE NEAR BY, MOST OF AMERICA WOULDN'T CONSIDER THIS TYPE OF ACTION, BEING WORRIED ABOUT LIABILITY, AND LEGAL PROCESS, AND HAVING THE FAMILY MAKE FALSE CLAIMS THAT WOULD CAUSE INCARCERATION, BUT THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A NEIGHBOR. ACTOR PAUL WALKER (R.I.P.) WAS THIS KIND OF NEIGHBOR, HE WATCHED WEATHER REPORTS AND WENT TO AREAS THAT WERE DEVASTATED BY TORNADOES, GIVING A "HELPING HAND" TO PEOPLE WHO WERE DEVASTATED BY SUCH DISASTERS, AND IT'S CALLED BEING A NEIGHBOR, WHICH IS SOMETHING WE OF THIS 21ST CENTURY NEED TO RETURN TO! TRUE, THERE'S NO FINANCIAL PAY OFF, BUT THERE IS A GREAT SATISFACTION THAT NO-ONE CAN PUT A PRICE TAG ON! HOWEVER THERE MIGHT BE A RETURN PAYMENT TO THIS, TRUE MANY PEOPLE MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUCH A "GOOD NATURE" FROM A HOBO, BUT THOSE FOLKS ARE NOT THE NORM AND STANDARD, I'VE EXPERIENCED THIS PERSONALLY! THE PAY OFF I'M DESCRIBING IS A HOBO COMING BACK THROUGH AN AREA, AND NOW IN NEED OF HELP THEMSELVES, THEY MEET UP WITH THE PEOPLE THEY ORIGINALLY HELPED IN THEIR TIME OF NEED, AND THOSE FOLKS GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY GIVE AID TO THE HOBO. GIVING BACK IN A RETURN PAYMENT FOR HELPING THEM OUT IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE AN OVERWHELMING SITUATION, BUT GIVING BACK 10, 20, 50, OR 100 TIMES AS MUCH AS WAS RECEIVED. THUS: WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND PROVEN!, DON'T SAY IT WON'T

HAPPEN, I'VE SEEN THE POSITIVE EVIDENCE OF THIS MANY TIMES IN MY 64 YEARS!

NASHVILLE IS QUITE THE BIG TOWN THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE IT IS, ALTHOUGH LOOKING AT NASHVILLE ONE WOULDN'T THINK SO, THE SKYLINE ONLY APPEARS AFTER YOU COME OFF THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS, IF YOU'RE COMING FROM THE EAST. WITH A QUICK CROSS OF THE CUMBERLAND RIVER YOU'RE IN DOWNTOWN, BUT THE CITY LIMITS START 9 MILES FURTHER TO THE EAST, FROM DOWNTOWN THE CITY LIMITS EXTEND 10 MILES TO THE WEST, 7 MILES TO THE NORTH, AND 8 MILES TO THE SOUTH. NASHVILLE STARTED OUT AS A RIVER TOWN, WITH STERNWHEELERS PLYING A TRADE FROM WHERE IT BEGINS IN KENTUCKY AT RACELAND, WITH SEVERAL SMALL STREAMS FEEDING IT THE CUMBERLAND BECOMES A DEEP AND WIDE TRAFFIC ROUTE THROUGH NASHVILLE INTO ALABAMA, PAST MONTGOMERY, ENDING IN THE BAY AT MOBILE. HEAVY RIVER TRAFFIC WAS THE MEANS OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY IN NASHVILLE, "MOONSHINE" WAS ANOTHER PRODUCT THAT WAS MADE AND TRANSPORTED ON THIS RIVER, ALTHOUGH AFTER DARK, AND USUALLY BY MOONLIGHT. RAILROADS WERE ANOTHER INDUSTRY, WITH COAL BEING TRANSPORTED AND LOCALLY MINED, AS WELL AS THE MINING OF LIMESTONE, SLATE, AND SANDSTONE, OR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURING, AND PASSENGER RAILROAD CARS ARE BUILT HERE. ALL BEING TRANSPORTED ON EITHER THE SOUTHERN, OR L&N RAILROADS, THEN THERE'S THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, MOST PEOPLE THINK THIS STARTED IN L.A. (THIS TIME LOS ANGELES, NOT LOWER ALABAMA) BUT MOST RECORDING COMPANIES HAVE THEIR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL OFFICES HERE.

GREGG AND DUANE ALLMAN WHO STARTED THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND WERE BORN AT THE COUNTY HOSPITAL HERE IN NASHVILLE, THE ROYALTY OF COUNTRY MUSIC RESIDE HERE, BLUEGRASS MUSIC ORIGINATED IN AND AROUND THIS AREA, AND WSM STUDIOS ARE LOCATED HERE, THE RADIO STATION THAT STARTED THE LONGEST RUNNING LIVE SHOW IN AMERICA, "THE GRAND 'OL OPRY," ON THE AIR SINCE 1928! MANY OF THE STARS OF COUNTRY MUSIC WERE BORN IN AREAS WHERE YOU HAD TO DRIVE LONG DISTANCES TO WORK, AND SO MOVING HERE THEY HAVE MOST OF THEIR HOMES OUTSIDE OF TOWN, IN AREAS RESEMBLING WHERE THEY WERE BORN AND DON'T MIND THE MILEAGE IT TAKES TO GET TO WORK. THUS THE POPULATION IS STILL A COUPLE MILLION, BUT IS SPREAD OUT ACROSS THE COUNTY, DRIVING TO THE STORE OR WORK MIGHT TAKE SEVERAL MILES AND AN HOUR OR TWO BUT THAT WAS NOTHING

THEN, AND THAT HABIT WAS INSTILLED IN THEIR DNA. SO THAT INSTINCT RESURFACED WHEN THE MUSICIANS MOVED TO NASHVILLE, DRIVING 5-10 MILES INTO TOWN, AND THE TRAFFIC JAMS WERE NOTHING TO THESE MUSICIANS AFTER YEARS OF TRAVELING ON BUSES. BUT IN THE OLD DAYS THEY WOULD TRAVEL FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES ON PASSENGER TRAINS TO WORK IN NASHVILLE, ALONG THE WAY THEY'D PASS FREIGHT TRAINS WITH HOBO'S ON BOARD, THE SCENES THEY'D SEE FROM THE PASSENGER TRAINS INSPIRED HUNDREDS OF SONGS. AND THE HOBO'S THEY PASSED WITH STORIES ALL THEIR OWN INSPIRED HUNDREDS MORE, THE SINGING BRAKEMAN JIMMY RODGERS WAS A HOBO BEFORE BECOMING A BRAKEMAN, HIS SONGS SPOKE OF THE HOBO THAT HE LIVED WITH ITS PROBLEMS, AND PLEASURES.

THESE SONGS IMMORTALIZED THE HOBO'S I GREW UP WITH IN THE MEMORIES OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS OVER THE 20TH & 21ST CENTURY, WITH JIMMIE RODGERS ALSO CAME WILLIE NELSON, BOXCAR WILLIE (WHICH IS A PLAY ON A DEROGATORY TERM FOR HOBO'S IN THE EARLY 1920'S.) BUT MORE MODERN MAINSTREAM SONG WRITERS AND SINGERS EMERGED TO PERFORM SONGS WHOSE SUBJECT MATERIAL WAS HOBO'S, TO NAME A FEW: LYNRYD SKYNYRD, GREGG ALLMAN, THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND, OR STEVE EARLE, I WAS AT A STEVE EARLE CONCERT IN MY EARLY 40'S AND WAS ABLE TO ASK HIM IF HE WOULD CONSIDER WRITING SONGS ABOUT HOBO'S. STEVE ASKED ME WHY I BROUGHT THE SUBJECT UP, SO I TOLD HIM ABOUT MY LIFE AS A HOBO, HE THEN STATED HE WOULD ATTEMPT THIS ACTION BUT WOULDN'T PROMISE ANYTHING, OR IF THE RECORD COMPANY HE RECORDED FOR WOULD RELEASE ANY SONG CONCERNING HOBO'S. IN 2017 HE CAME OUT WITH A SONG WHOSE ALBUM WAS TITLED "THE LOW HIGHWAY," IT WAS THE 2ND BEST SELLING ALBUM OF THE YEAR, IT IS SUNG IN THE 1ST PERSON STYLE, AS IF STEVE IS TELLING THE LIFE OF A "RUBBER TIRE HOBO" AND I HAVE TO ADMIT HE GOT EVERYTHING RIGHT, THE STYLE OF LIFE, AND EMOTIONS FELT!

IN MY LATER YEARS I RODE WITH MANY RUBBER TIRE HOBO'S, ALTHOUGH WE REFERRED TO THEM AS "RUBBER TRAMPS," THE MOST REVILED OF MIGRATORY PEOPLE TODAY, THEIR ENTIRE EXISTENCE IS TO DRIVE A WRECK OF A CAR AND EXTRACT HARDSHIP FUNDS FROM CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS. EXHAUSTING THE FUNDS PUT IN PLACE TO AID PEOPLE IN TRUE DIRE SITUATIONS. REVILED BECAUSE THEY GIVE A BAD NAME TO OTHER MIGRATORY TRAVELERS WHO MAY NEED TEMPORARY FUNDS TO AID THEM IN THEIR TRAVELS TO EMPLOYMENT 1 OR 2 TIMES A YEAR. THIS INCLUDES HITCHHIKERS, AND ECONOMICALLY

DISPLACED PEOPLE, OR THOSE IN BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS, ONCE AGAIN - LEECHES!, - AND REVILED BY THE HOBO NATION! I TRAVELED WITH PEOPLE LIKE THIS FOR SHORT DISTANCES TO GAIN A MILEAGE ADVANTAGE, BUT "THIS IS NOT THE LIFE FOR ME," THEREFORE I USUALLY STAYED WITH FREIGHT TRAINS, MANY TIMES SITTING ON A SECTION OF A TRAIN 3-4 DAYS WAITING TO BE PICKED UP AND SHIPPED FURTHER TO MY DESTINATION! STILL THIS SONG PLAYED THROUGH MY HEAD AS I LIVED MY LIFE SHOWING ME WHAT A NEW HOBO THEME SONG IT COULD BECOME:

THE LOW HIGHWAY

TRAVELING NOW, ON THE LOW HIGHWAY

2000 MILES TO THE 'FRISCO BAY

CROSS THE RIVERS WILD, AND THE LONESOME PLAINS

UP THE COAST AND DOWN, AND BACK AGAIN.

SAW EMPTY HOUSES ON A DEAD END STREET

PEOPLE LINING UP FOR SOMETHING TO EAT

AND THE GHOST OF AMERICA WATCHING ME

THROUGH THE BROKEN WINDOWS OF THE FACTORIES.

PICKING BONES OF A BETTER DAY

AS I ROLL DOWN ON THE LOW HIGHWAY.

TRAVELING NOW ON THE LOW HIGHWAY

BY THE YELLOW MOON, AND THE LIGHT OF DAY

CROSS THE SNOW WHITE CROWN OF THE MOUNTAINS TALL

TO THE VALLEYS DOWN WHERE THE SHADOWS FALL

MET A MAN WITH A RIFLE IN HIS HAND

BEEN AWAY TO BATTLE IN A DISTANT LAND

TAUGHT HIM TO HATE, TAUGHT HIM TO KILL

NOW HE'S OUT ON THE ROAD WITH A HOLE TO FILL

**NOBODY KNOWS THE PRICE HE PAID
SO HE TAKES HIS TOLL ON THE LOW HIGHWAY.
TRAVELING NOW, ON THE LOW HIGHWAY
WINDOWS DOWN, LISTENING
WHEELS TURNING ROUND ON THE ASPHALT SAYING
EVERY SOUND IS A PROPHECY
HEARD AN OLD MAN GRUMBLE AND A YOUNG GIRL CRY
BRICK WALL CRUMBLE AND A WHITE DOVE FLY
AND A CRY FOR JUSTICE, AND A CALL FOR PEACE
FORCE OF REASON IN THE ROAR OF THE BEAST
AND EVERY MILE IS A PRAYER I PRAYED
AS I ROLL DOWN ON THE LOW HIGHWAY.**

**MUCH AS AN ANTHEM FOR HOBO'S TODAY AS IT WOULD BE FOR THE HOBO'S
WE RECEIVED OUR FROM! INHERITANCE**



CHAPTER 20

SO NOW I'M LEAVING NASHVILLE AND HEADING FURTHER WEST, AND A LOT HAS BEEN REVEALED BY THIS ORATORY, AND THIS IS A MEMORY FROM JUST MY FIRST YEAR "ON THE ROAD," GUESS I DID LIVE AN ADVENTURE, LOOK OUT AMERICA, THERE'S A NEW LEWIS AND CLARK IN TOWN, AND A NEW ADVENTURE TO ESCAPE FROM YOUR BORING LIFE INTO, AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE HOME TO DO IT! WHAT I WANTED TO DO WAS CATCH OUT FOR BRUCETON TENNESSEE, A DIVISION POINT ON THE L&N RAILROAD BUT I DIDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE GOING TO SOUTH NASHVILLE WHERE THE MAIN TRAIN YARD WAS LOCATED IT WAS A DILEMMA, COULD I CATCH AS THE TRAIN WAS ROLLING THROUGH TOWN? AT THIS TIME I HAD NEVER CAUGHT ON THE FLY AND WASN'T SURE THAT I COULD, OUT OF THE FRYING PAN AND INTO THE FIRE, I JUST HAD TO WING IT AND PRAY I DIDN'T END UP AS ROAD KILL. AND AS THE TRAIN PASSED ME I REMEMBERED THE SAGE ADVICE FROM THE OLD HOBO'S WHO WERE AROUND WHEN I WAS GROWING UP ".....IF YOU NEED TO CATCH ON THE FLY, LOOK AT THE WHEELS AND COUNT THE LUGS ON THE AXLE, IF YOU COUNT MORE THAN 3 LUGS - THE TRAIN IS GOING TOO FAST....." NOW HERE THEY'RE REFERRING TO THE CENTER AXLE, ON THE AXLE IS THE ROLLER BEARING, AND A LOCKING CAP, SEALING ALL THIS INTO PLACE ARE 3 LUGS THAT ARE AIR RATCHETED ON, BUT THESE ARE NOT LIKE THE LUGS ON YOUR CAR.

THE INDUSTRIAL AIR RATCHET USED HAS AIR THAT IS MEASURED IN TONS INSTEAD OF POUNDS, THAT'S LIKE WELDING YOUR LUGS ONTO YOUR CAR, NOT EXACTLY THE LUGS YOU CAN BREAK WITH A SIMPLE TIRE TOOL, YOU COULDN'T BUDGE THOSE LUGS ONE MILLIMETER. WELL GETTING PAST ALL THIS MY DILEMMA WAS THE FEAR OF BECOMING "ROAD KILL" OR BEING TURNED INTO CHOPPED LIVER FROM TRYING TO "CATCH ON THE FLY" OF WHICH I HAD NO EXPERIENCE DOING, AND DOING SUCCESSFULLY, THE FIRST TIME I HUNG ON THE "GRAB IRONS" SO TIGHTLY THAT I STAYED IN PLACE FOR A LONG TIME APPEARING LIKE A CIRCUS ACROBAT. I'VE CAUGHT ON THE FLY MORE SUCCESSFULLY SINCE THAT TIME, BUT HAVE NO REAL DESIRE TO DO SO AGAIN, THE ACTION CAN BE TRULY DANGEROUS, MANY ASPECTS AND DECISIONS COME INTO PLAY, THE WATCHING FOR A COUNT OF WHEEL LUGS. THE ANGLE OF BALLAST ON THE RIGHT OF WAY, A PERSONS BALANCE WHILE LIGHTLY RUNNING, WHETHER OR NOT YOU'RE CARRYING A HEAVY OR LIGHTLY FILLED BACKPACK. THEN THE ABILITY TO GRAB THE IRONS AND PULL YOURSELF UP,

FOLLOWING THE ADVICE OF OLD HOBO'S, (AT THIS POINT I'M GOING TO PREACH AND ADMONISH ON THIS SUBJECT, TOO MANY PEOPLE WILL READ THESE WORDS AND GO OUT TO EXPERIENCE THIS LIFE AND ACTIVITY, PLEASE HEED MY ADVICE AND DON'T JUST HEAR ME PREACHING) IF YOU STILL DECIDE TO GO OUT AND TRY THIS ACTIVITY, TRAVEL WITH SOMEBODY EXPERIENCED AND HEED THEIR ADVICE OTHERWISE YOU'LL MAKE A DEADLY MISTAKE!

AH YES, NOW I CAN HEAR THE MOANS THAT TELL ME YOU'RE SAYING TO YOURSELF THAT I'M TRYING TO KEEP YOU FROM ENJOYING THIS FUN, WELL IT IS FUN BUT IT'S STILL DANGEROUS, IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME GO TO A WEBSITE CALLED "FACES OF DEATH" AND SEE THE RESULTS OF MISTAKES MADE WHILE TRYING TO EMULATE WHAT EXPERIENCED HOBO'S PRACTICE. TAKE THIS INFORMATION AND REVELATION TO HEART, REMEMBER THIS INFORMATION FOR YOUR OWN EDIFICATION, AND INCREASE YOUR INTELLIGENCE, IN EFFECT - THINK, USE YOUR BRAIN. I WOULDN'T BE RESPONSIBLE IF I DIDN'T GIVE YOU THIS WARNING! SO I THINK THIS MIGHT BE ENOUGH PREACHING FOR THIS FAR IN THIS BOOK, JUST REMEMBER THAT IF I FEEL A MORE THOROUGH PREACHING, OR EXPOUNDING IS NEEDED, I'LL GIVE MY OWN VERSION OF A REVIVAL.

SO I WAITED UNTIL THE CAR WAS APPROACHING AND MY CONFIDENCE WAS BOLSTERED, (CALL IT MENTAL PSYCHING) THE TRAIN WAS RUNNING RELATIVELY SLOW, THE RIGHT OF WAY WAS SMOOTH AND FLAT, MY BACKPACK ONLY WEIGHED 40 POUNDS, AND I HAD THE ENERGY TO SPRINT 15 MILES AN HOUR. I BEGAN RUNNING WITH THE CAR, THEN I HEARD IT, THE BANGING OF CARS AS THE TRAIN TRIED TO PICK UP SPEED, NOW I REALLY HAD A DECISION TO MAKE, LET GO AND WAIT FOR ANOTHER TRAIN, OR GET ON BOARD?, MY DECISION WAS JUMP TOWARDS THE TRAIN AND PULL MYSELF UP. AS I WAS PULLING MYSELF TO THE TRAIN I GOT ONE FOOT ON THE BOTTOM RUNG OF THE SIDE LADDER, THE REST OF MY BODY CAUSED MY OTHER FOOT TO LURCH TOWARD THE WHEEL OF THE CAR, AND I ALMOST BECAME CHOPPED LIVER. FOLKS I'LL USE AN OBSCENTITY, I SHIT A BRICK!, ALMOST TO THE POINT OF HAVING IT RUN DOWN THE PANTS LEG OF MY JEANS, SINCE THAT TIME I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND SAFE AT CATCHING ON THE FLY, BUT I DON'T SUGGEST IT FOR ANYBODY, IT'S STILL DANGEROUS, UNLESS YOU HAVE NO CHOICE GET ON THE TRAIN WHILE IT'S STANDING STILL. AFTER MY HEART DROPPED OUT OF MY THROAT I SETTLED IN FOR A SMOOTH RIDE PAST THE CANNERY, A FORMER DOG FOOD CANNERY THAT HAS BEEN TURNED

INTO A NIGHTCLUB, WHERE I USED TO DO JANITORIAL WORK AT, HEADING FOR BRUCETON, A CREW CHANGE AND A DIVISION POINT, I COULD CAMP OUT AND FISH WHILE WAITING FOR ANOTHER TRAIN THAT WAS GOING TO STOP HEADING INTO MEMPHIS.

ROLLING THROUGH TENNESSEE IS ALWAYS A STEP BACK INTO TIME, ALMOST EVERY TOWN AND FARM LOOKS LIKE IT'S STILL THE 1950'S, OLD CARS, OLD TRACTORS, RUSTY ITEMS IN EVERY YARD LOOKING LIKE IT CAME OUT OF A REMENISCE MAGAZINE. BACKYARDS, THEY TELL YOU WHAT A PERSON, OR FAMILY REALLY VALUES, THIS IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE SEEN FROM THE HIGHWAY, WHEN YOU'RE TRAVELING DOWN A HIGHWAY THERE'S 50 FEET OF GRASS BETWEEN YOU AND THE SCENERY, AS WELL AS A WINDOW, WHEN YOU TRAVEL ON A FREIGHT TRAIN THE SCENERY IS IN YOUR FACE, HIGHWAYS GO MILES AROUND TOWNS, FREIGHT TRAINS GO RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE OF CITIES AND TOWNS, THEY GO RIGHT THROUGH PEOPLES BACKYARDS! AND EVERY BACKYARD HOLDS A PROJECT, OLD DREAMS OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE OF USING WHATEVER THEY ARE WORKING ON TO GO BACK IN TIME AND DREAM THEIR DREAMS AND RELIVE THEIR OWN ADVENTURES, BACK WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG ENOUGH TO GO ON AN ADVENTURE, THUS SOMETHING THAT A PRICE TAG CANNOT BE PUT ON, TO PASS ONTO THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN, INHERITANCE!

ONE OF THE REASONS I WANTED TO STOP IN BRUCETON FOR WAS TO SEE AND WORK SEASONALLY FOR NATIONAL ROSE, A FARM THAT EVERY CONCEIVABLE ROSE WAS EVER BRED FOR SALE, RUBY RED, YELLOW, PINK, PEACH, ROYAL, RAMBLING, ROSE OF SHARON, YOU GET THE IDEA. (HOPEFULLY) ANOTHER REASON IS FOR ROSE OIL, THERE IS A DIVISION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FT. WORTH THAT USES ROSE OIL AS A MASKING SCENT TO DEODORIZE THEIR CHURCH SINCE K.K.K. HATERS ATTACKED THEIR CHURCH WITH HOMEMADE STINK BOMBS MADE OF RED FOX URINE, AND SKUNK SCENT GLANDS. SEVERAL HOBO'S HAVE TRIED TO DE-SCENT THE CHURCH SEEING THIS CHURCH AIDS HOBO'S WITH FOOD, CLOTHES, AND WORK WHENEVER ASKED, THEY FOUND THAT THERE'S NO WAY TO DEODORIZE THE CHURCH, SO THEY USED ROSE OIL TO MASK THE SMELL. WHENEVER A HOBO CAN GET A HOLD OF ROSE OIL WE TAKE IT TO THIS CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FT. WORTH, THIS IS A NON-CATHOLIC'S WAY OF GIVING THANKS TO THE PREIST, AND CHURCH FOR BEING SO KIND TO THOSE OF US THAT ARE THOUGHT (BUT NEVER PROVEN, AND NEVER WILL BE PROVEN) TO BE NO GOOD, BUMS, THIEVES, DRUNKS,

WORTHLESS. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT SO MANY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, STATE AND FEDERAL, AS WELL AS POLICE AGENCIES TRY TO INDOCTRINATE THE POPULACE TO BELIEVE WE ARE!, AND NONE OF THEM WANT TO FIND OUT THE TRUTH EITHER, BELIEVING WHAT EVER INDOCTRINATION, INNUENDO, AND BRAIN WASHING THEY ARE FED! A VICIOUS CYCLE THAT BEGINS AT THE TOP AND EXTENDS TO THE BOTTOM, WITH NO-ONE QUESTIONING WHERE THIS INFORMATION ORIGINATES, OR WHO PULLS THE STRINGS, WHO THE PUPPET MASTER IS! (SO TO SPEAK)

IN BRUCETON THERE IS A LAKE, AND IN THAT LAKE IS A CATFISH, THE LARGEST CATFISH IN THE WORLD, SOME HISTORIANS STATE THAT IT IS OVER 150 YEARS OLD, OLD ENOUGH TO BE A YOUNG FISH DURING THE HATFIELD AND MCCOY FEUD, THIS CATFISH IS QUOTED TO BE 12 FEET LONG, AND COULD SWALLOW A MAN WHOLE. PEOPLE HAVE TRIED TO CATCH THIS CATFISH WITHOUT SUCCESS, ONLY TO DISAPPEAR DURING THEIR FISHING TRIP, IS THIS TRUE, OR JUST A TALE MEANT TO GARNER TOURISM TO AN AREA WHERE NONE EXISTS? IN THE FIRST YEAR ON THE ROAD, AND EVERY YEAR SINCE I HAVE VISITED THIS LAKE TO LOOK FOR THIS FISH AND HAVE ONLY VIEWED ITS WAKE, A FABLED BRUCETON MONSTER OF THE LAKE, SIMILAR TO THE LOCH NESS MONSTER, OR THAT OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN, IN NEW YORK STATE - "CHAMP!" SHOULD I TELL YOU THIS IS A TALL TALE?, OR SHOULD I LET YOU LOOK FOR YOURSELF AND DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS?, THERE ARE MANY CREATURES OF THIS WORLD, OLD AS IT IS, THAT ARE JUST NOW BEING DISCOVERED! AND ALTHOUGH MOST AMERICANS ARE OF THE IDEA THAT ADVENTURE IS NO LONGER FOUND ON A ROAD TRIP, LIKE YOUR PARENTS WENT ON WITH THEIR PARENTS, WHAT I HAVE VIEWED AND DISCOVERED IS THAT THERE IS A LARGE HOST OF NATURAL ABNORMALITIES IN THE LOWER 48 THAT HAVE YET TO BE FOUND AND VIEWED BY THE PUBLIC. SO HERE'S TO ALL YOU MODERN P.T. BARNUMS, LOOK FOR THESE CREATURES, CATALOG THEM, AND DISPLAY PHYSICAL REFLECTIONS OF THEM TO GIVE THE PUBLIC A BETTER EDIFICATION, INFORM THEM WHERE THE F.B.I. & C.I.A. ARE INSTRUCTED TO STAY SILENT ABOUT THE SUBJECT, AND HELP ME GET AMERICANS TO TURN OFF THEIR CELL PHONES. THEY ARE OUR GOVERNMENT'S PACIFIER, KEEPING US IN THE DARK!

BRUCETON IS A DIVISION POINT, AND AN AREA WHERE THE RAILROAD WILL STOP ITS TRAINS IN THE SAME PLACE, AND FOR THE SAME LENGTH OF TIME AS IT DID WHEN IT WAS STILL THE L&N! BUT NOW IT'S THE C.S.X, AND ROLLS AFTER DARK, GOING THROUGH THE DARK PINE WOODLANDS AND WESTERN

TENNESSEE COAL FIELDS, WHERE CIVIL WAR BATTLES WERE FOUGHT AND THE YOUNG PERISHED. AN AREA WHERE THE AMERICAN CULTURE BEGAN AND CONTINUED TO EVOLVE WITH IT'S YOUNG WARRIORS, AS WELL AS THE DISPLACED WHO WANDERED THE COUNTRY, IT WAS, AND IS NOT A DECIDED WAY OF LIFE BUT AN INHERITANCE OF CULTURE, JUST AS MUCH A PART OF A PERSONS D.N.A. AS THEIR BLOOD TYPES, OR CHROMOSOMES, AND THERE ARE STILL MANY THAT ARE THE CITIZENS OF THIS ROAMING NATION CALLED HOBO'S.

WELL I DON'T WANT TO PREACH RIGHT NOW, LET ME GO FURTHER ON WITH THIS DIALOG, UPON LEAVING BRUCETON THE TRAIN CHAUFFEURD ME EAST THROUGH OLD GROWTH WOODLANDS, AND FORMER STRIP MINES, ONCE THOUGHT AN "EYE SORE," NOW CONSIDERED AN ASSET, FORMER STRIP MINES HAVE BECOME LAKES TEEMING WITH FISH, CONTAINING FRESH WATER, AND RETURNING THE ONCE SCARRED LAND BACK TO A NATURAL POINT OF INTEREST. THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD USING EVOLUTION TO RECYCLE, AND REVITALIZE AN AREA ONCE THOUGHT AN ECOLOGICAL DISASTER INTO AN ECOLOGICAL ASSET, AND THERE IS A SPIRITUAL FEEL TO THIS AREA, AS IF THE SOUL OF THE EARTH GIVING THANKS FOR A 2ND CHANCE TO LIVE AND THRIVE! AND NOW THE AIR BECOMES THICKER AS WE GET CLOSER TO THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, AND THE CITY OF MEMPHIS, THERE STILL ARE MANY RADIO STATIONS HERE, AS WELL AS RECORDING STUDIOS, SUN RECORDS IS STILL HERE AND PROMOTES UNKNOWN MUSICIANS TO BECOME NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED MUSICAL STARS, THE SAME WAY THEY DID FOR B.B. KING! (ORIGINALLY HIS 1ST NAME WAS REILLY THE B.B. STOOD FOR BLUES BOY) JOHN LEE HOOKER GOT HIS START AT A RADIO STATION/RECORDING STUDIO HERE IN MEMPHIS, THEN MOVED TO DETROIT MICHIGAN TO OPEN A NIGHTCLUB, AND BECOME A PARTNER WITH BERRY GORDY TO MANAGE HITSVILLE U.S.A, THEN CAME BACK TO MEMPHIS TO PLAY ON A GENTRIFIED BEAL STREET AS A RE-FOUNDER OF THE CULTURAL BLUES NEIGHBORHOOD, PLAY ON THE STREET, AND PLAY A PART IN THE ORIGINAL BLUES BROTHERS MOVIE WITH DAN AKROYD AND JOHN BELUSHI. AND HE ATTAINED ALL THIS NOTERIETY FROM GETTING HIS START AT A MEMPHIS RADIO STATION/RECORDING STUDIO!, THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER LANDMARK IN MEMPHIS, MUD ISLAND, USED TO BE THE HOBO CITY, WHERE THE HOBO NATION WOULD EXPERIENCE HAVING ITS OWN COUNTRY, (MAINLY BECAUSE NO-ONE WANTED TO VISIT IT.) TO DO SO A PERSON FIRST HAD TO PADDLE A ROWBOAT ACROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER TO THE ISLAND, AND THEN, WHILE THERE, HAVE TO ENDURE THE LARGEST MOSQUITO HORDE IN THE WORLD, I'VE

ALWAYS WONDERED WHY OUR GOVERNMENT DIDN'T USE THIS MOSQUITO HORDE TO BATTLE OUR MANY ENEMIES. INFEST WHAT EVER COUNTRY, OR DESPOT WITH THE HORDE, AND LET THEM GO TO WORK, THEY'D BITE AND SUCK SO MUCH BLOOD OF THE DESPOT AND THE OPPOSING FORCE SO BADLY THEY'D SURRENDER BEFORE A WAR EVEN STARTED, IT WOULD SAVE THE LIVES OF OUR MILITARY AND THAT OF OUR ALLIES. AND WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO ENDURE WARS LIKE LEBANON, AFGHANISTAN, IRAN, OR IRAQ, SADDAM HUSSEIN AND OSAMA BIN LADEN WOULD HEAR WE'RE SENDING THE MOSQUITO HORDE AND SAY "WE GIVE UP, SEND US TO GUANTANAMO BAY!"

WELL THE ISLAND, THEN, WAS ORDERLY, WELL MAINTAINED, AND ORGANIZED LIKE MILITARY COMPLEX, WITH A LAUNDRY, MESS HALL, KITCHEN, BARRACKS, TRANSPORTATION, LIGHTING SYSTEM, CLOTHING SUPPLY, POLICE DEPARTMENT, ALSO CALLED A GOON SQUAD, AND A BANK ALSO CALLED A FRISCO CIRCLE. AND THERE'S A STORY BEHIND THAT, IN THE EARLY 1800'S A GROUP OF HOBO'S WERE ENCAMPED ON THE ARKANSAS RIVER IN TULSA OKLAHOMA, THEY REALIZED THEY NEEDED A SYSTEM TO ENSURE A SUPPLY OF FOOD, OR MONEY TO BUY SUPPLIES, SO THEY ELECTED ONE OF THE GOON SQUAD AS A GUARD TO SECURE A LARGE POT INTO WHICH FOOD AND MONEY IS WAS DEPOSITED. THIS JUNGLE BANK WAS USED TO MAINTAIN THE CONSTANTLY SIMMERING HOBO STEW. THIS "BANK" WAS STARTED IN A JUNGLE ON THE PROPERTY OF THE ST. LOUIS & SAN FRANCISCO RAILROAD, ALSO NICKNAMED "THE FRISCO," THE NEW HOBO BANK WAS REFERRED TO AS THE FRISCO CIRCLE AND THE IDEA CAUGHT ON IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THE FRISCO CIRCLE WAS A GROUP GATHERING IDEA THAT SPAWNED THE PRESENT DAY FOOD BANKS THAT POPULATE THE MANY MAJOR CITIES IN THE U.S. SO WHEN YOU PASS A FOOD BANK LOOK TO THE TRAIN TRACKS AND THANK THE HOBO'S FOR INVENTING THE IDEA!

CHAPTER 21

THIS IS QUITE INFORMATIVE ISN'T IT?, IT SEEMS THAT MY FAMILY HAS HIDDEN ITSELF AWAY FROM THE PUBLIC EYES BECAUSE THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY DOES NOT BELIEVE IN AN ALTERNATE POINT OF VIEW, AND AT THE TIME I WAS 13 IT DIDN'T MATTER. WHAT MATTERED WAS THAT WE LIVED LIFE TO THE FULLEST DESPITE THE LIES, AND INNUENDO THAT WAS PROFESSED CONCERNING OUR NUMBERS AND OUR CULTURE, ONCE A PERSON OR GROUP HAVE DECIDED TO DEFY THE GENERAL NORM AND STANDARD THERE'S NO STOPPING THEM. A GOOD CASE IN POINT COMES FROM THE PRESENT DAY, IN UKRAINE THE PRESIDENT AND POPULATION HAVE DEFIED RUSSIAN PRESIDENT PUTIN WHO HAS THE IDIOTIC POINT OF VIEW THAT UKRAINE NEEDS TO REJOIN THE REST OF RUSSIA. IN REALITY RUSSIA IS ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED BECAUSE THE MINERALS IN THE UKRAINIAN MOUNTAINS, AND THE UKRAINIAN AGRICULTURE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR RUSSIA'S, AND SPECIFICALLY THE KREMLIN'S LAVISH LIFESTYLE, BUT WHEN UKRAINE BECAME A SEPARATE COUNTRY THAT LAVISH LIFESTYLE BECAME JUST A MEMORY. MANY RUSSIANS, SPECIFICALLY THE HIREARCHY OF THE S.V.R. WHO ARE PUTIN'S SERVANTS DON'T WANT TO LIVE LIKE GENERAL CITIZENS WHO ENDURE FOOD AND GAS RATIONING, AND WANT TO RETURN TO THE DAYS OF THEIR PERSONAL "SHANGRI LA"! THIS IS THE REASON PUTIN ORDERED THE RUSSIAN MILITARY TO INVADE

ATTEMPT TO BOMB THE STONE AGE, THE PRESIDENT OF DEFYING PUTIN TO JOIN HIS N.A.T.O, TO HAVE INTERNATIONAL REMAIN AN COUNTRY. THIS IS EXAMPLE OF ON AN SCALE, SHOULD I



UKRAINE. AND THEM BACK TO IT'S ALSO WHY UKRAINE IS AND ATTEMPTING COUNTRY WITH THE SUPPORT TO INDEPENDENT A PRIME HOBO MENTALITY INTERNATIONAL MENTION THIS

PARALLEL?, THE IMPLICATIONS ARE THAT OTHER OVERBEARING COUNTRIES SHOULD TRY THE IDEOLOGIES OF UKRANIANS, OR THAT OF HOBO'S, IT MIGHT MAKE LIFE IN THE RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES EASIER TO ENDURE, AS OPPOSED TO LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENTS!

I DIDN'T WANT TO BECOME POLITICAL IN THIS BOOK, AND I HAVE NO LOVE OF POLITICS BUT MANIFEST DESTINY AND THE RIGHT TO A FREE CHOICE IS THE BASIS TO BEGIN A NEW COUNTRY, HOWEVER THAT IDEOLOGY BECOMES PERVERTED WHEN A PERSON IS ELECTED TO A POLITICAL OFFICE AND THERE ARE NO CHECKS AND BALANCES TO ENSURE THAT POLITICIAN IS A SERVANT TO THE PEOPLE WHO ELECTED HIM/HER. IF THIS HAPPENS THE PERSON ELECTED TO THAT OFFICE NEEDS TO BE REMOVED AND ANOTHER POLITICIAN SHOULD TAKE THEIR PLACE, ONE WHO REALLY IS A SERVANT, NOT A DICTATOR! JUST A THOUGHT PEOPLE, REMEMBER YOUR VOTE COUNTS, AND IF SOMEONE IS ELECTED TO OFFICE ONLY TO GATHER AS MUCH MONEY DURING THEIR TIME IN OFFICE, AND YOU DIDN'T VOTE, YOU ONLY HAVE YOURSELF TO BLAME! HOW DID I GET ON THIS SUBJECT?, PASSION? PERSPECTIVE?, I'M NOT GOING THROUGH ALL THE "P'S" RIGHT NOW, IF I DO I'LL BE GETTING OFF TOPIC, SO LET ME LOOK SEVERAL CHAPTERS BACK AND SEE WHERE I GOT OFF THE RAILS.

MY VISIT TO MUD ISLAND KEPT REPEATING EVERY YEAR THAT I CAME THROUGH MEMPHIS, WHETHER COMING IN ON ROCK ISLAND, COTTON BELT, MISSOURI PACIFIC, THE FRISCO, LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE, OR ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF. IT WAS THE ONLY PLACE TO LIVE FOR A HOBO, WITH A CITY GOVERNMENT THAT PERSECUTES THE LOWER CLASS, OTHER CITIZENS WITH THE SUPERIORITY ATTITUDE, AND "WHITE POWER" IDEOLOGY STILL EXIST, AND HOBO'S WILL ONLY GATHER TOGETHER WITH EACH OTHER, OR THE LOWER CLASS OF MEMPHIS. THAT OVERBEARING ATTITUDE THAT TELLS THE UPPER CLASS THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO TREAT THE LOWER CLASS WITH DERISION STILL SEPARATES THE MEMPHIS CITIZENS TODAY, SO FINDING A LOCATION WHERE THE UPPERCLASS WILL LEAVE THE LOWERCLASS ALONE IS A RARE GEM. MUD ISLAND HAS ONE BENEFIT THAT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY HOBO'S, THE ISLAND IS MADE OF GUMBO MUD, A NATURAL INSECT REPELLANT, IT MUST BE SMEARED ON EVERY PORTION OF EXPOSED SKIN, AND PEOPLE WEARING IT LOOK LIKE SWAMP MONSTERS BUT MOSQUITOES CAN'T BITE THROUGH THE MUD AND GIVE UP IN FRUSTRATION. THE CHOCTAW TRIBE WHO ORIGINALLY INHABITED THIS AREA USED THIS MUD TO ALLEVIATE THE DIRECT SUNLIGHT AND THE MOSQUITOES, IT MADE THEM APPEAR TO BE MONSTERS BUT THEY

WORE THE MUD TO ENSURE ALLEVIATION FROM BITING INSECTS, AS WELL AS GETTING OTHER PEOPLE (WHITE MEN) TO LEAVE THEM ALONE! SO THE HOBO'S TOOK THAT ACTIVITY AND ACTION TO HEART BY SMEARING THE GUMBO MUD ON THEMSELVES TO ALLEVIATE THEM FROM BOTH THE HEAT AND THE MOSQUITOES, BETWEEN GUMBO MUD, A FAMILY STYLE CAMARADERIE, TRUST BETWEEN FELLOW MEN AND WOMEN, GOOD FOOD, USING WHAT THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD HAS CREATED FOR OUR USE FREELY GROWING IN THE FORESTS AND FIELDS. GOOD FELLOWSHIP, NO CRIME, PLEASANT BREEZES, AND THE MEANS TO TRAVEL CROSS COUNTRY AT A MOMENTS WHIM, WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO LEAVE THIS SHANGRI LA TO ENDURE THE HOSTILITY AND INSECURE LIFE IN YOUR SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY? YOU'VE HEARD THE INNUENDO THAT HOBO'S ARE SMELLY, DIRTY, PEOPLE LIVING ON THE FRINGES OF SOCIETY, SOME OF THIS INNUENDO IS TRUE - BUT NOT ALL OF IT, A LOT OF THIS INNUENDO COMES FROM LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH PAST ACTIVITIES OF THE ORIGINAL AMERICANS - TRIBAL AMERICANS! HOBO'S REMEMBERED THE ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS OF THE TRIBAL AMERICANS BY OBSERVATION, AN ACTION THAT YOUR SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY HAS FORGOTTEN, WHERE YOU BUY MOSQUITO REPELLANT WE USE WHAT HAS BEEN SUPPLIED BY GOD, (I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO THE GOD THING AGAIN, TOO MANY ARGUMENTS!) THE SMEARING OF MUD AND USING OF NATURAL PLANTS FOR THE SAME PURPOSE IS POSSIBLY WHY PEOPLE REFERRED TO HOBO'S AS BEING SMELLY, AND DIRTY, BUT IT COMES FROM REMEMBERING THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM OBSERVATION OF A PEOPLES ACTIVITIES FOR HISTORY. WE'RE NOT THE UNEDUCATED PEOPLE THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLICE (CITY, STATE, FEDS, ETC.) CONSIDER AS BEING, DUMB AS A BAG OF HAMMERS, A PILE OF ROCKS, ETC, SO NOW IT'S LATE AT NIGHT, I'M LAYING ON THE GROUND ON MUD ISLAND, WATCHING THE CELESTIAL ENTERTAINMENT, STARS WINKING, METEORITES STREAKING ACROSS THE INKY BLACK OF A NIGHT SKY, SEEING A FULL MOON WHILE LISTENING TO DOGS HOWLING. NATURAL ENTERTAINMENT, NO NEED TO PAY FOR A TICKET, DRIVE THROUGH A TRAFFIC JAM, CURSE AT SLOW OR IDIOT DRIVERS, OR GRIPE ABOUT HAVING TO PARK 10 BLOCKS AWAY AND HAVING TO WALK THAT FAR TO GO TO THE THEATRE. JUST LAY BACK AND ENJOY WHAT GOD HAS SUPPLIED FOR OUR ENTERTAINMENT AND EDIFICATION, AND IT'S ALL FREE!

AND SO AM I, FREE TO ROAM AND TRAVEL ANYWHERE I CHOOSE TO GO, BY FOOT, OR CAR, OR BY AIRCRAFT, OR BY FREIGHT TRAIN, THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD WILL WATCH OVER, AND TRAVEL WITH ME AS WAS PROMISED IN THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE, ISAIAH 41:10 "..... FEAR NOT FOR I AM WITH THEE, BE

NOT DISMAYED FOR I AM THY GOD, I WILL STRENGTHEN THEE, I WILL HELP THEE, I WILL UPHOLD THEE WITH THE RIGHT HAND OF MY RITEOUSNESS....." NOW DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE THAT I AM LOOKING TO PREACH OR ORGANIZE A REVIVAL, I WAS NOT PUT IN THIS WORLD TO MANIPULATE YOU TO FOLLOW IN AN ACTIVITY THAT REFLECTS MY DESIRES, THUS I AM NOT TRYING TO SHOVE MY BELIEFS DOWN YOUR THROAT!, PERSONAL DESIRES OR RELIGION. JUST LIKE THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD I PRESENT MY WAY OF LIFE, IT IS UP TO YOU TO DECIDE WHETHER TO CHOOSE IF IT'S WHAT YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF, OR IF YOU DECIDE TO CHOOSE A DIFFERENT WAY TO LIVE, I WILL ACCEPT IT WITHOUT COMPLAINT. AND IF IT'S BETTER TO DO SO, WE CAN LIVE SIDE BY SIDE PEACEFULLY, THEN WITH THIS EXAMPLE WE WILL SHOW THAT WE HOBO'S DO HAVE A BETTER PLAN TO LIVE BY, FREE CHOICE, IT'S PROMISED IN THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE AND OUR BILL OF RIGHTS! NO, THIS IS NOT A RELIGIOUS DIATRIBE, THIS IS ME RELATING FACTS THAT I HAVE, AND IT IS MY OWN PERSONAL TRUTH, YOU MAY NOT HAVE THAT OPINION AND YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE THAT. ALL I'M DOING IS PRESENTING MY OPINION TO YOU, YOU HAVE A FREE CHIOCE, IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO BELIEVE ME AND IT WORKS OUT THAT IT'S THE WRONG CHOICE YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH IT!, I'M NOT GOING TO FORCE MY CHOICE ON YOU!

WELL MY CHOICE, AT THAT TIME, WAS TO CONTINUE ACROSS ARKANSAS ON THE MISSOURI PACIFIC, MORE EDUCATION WAS THERE THAT I NEEDED TO LEARN AND EXPERIENCE, WHAT DID ARKANSAS HAVE TO OFFER?, THAT WAS LACKING IN MY RESOURCES, AND HAVING THAT KNOWLEDGE WOULD AID ME IN FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS. I WENT TO THE "WYE" AT THE ROCK ISLAND TURN WHERE THERE'S A LARGE OAK TREE, A "LIVE OAK" WITH BRANCHES THAT SWEEP IN EVERY DIRECTION, THE LIMBS OF THESE LIVE OAK'S ARE JUST AS THICK AS THE TRUNKS, AND IT'S A FEDERAL CRIME TO CUT DOWN THE OAK'S. THESE OAK'S HAVE BEEN USED AS A "CATCH OUT JUNGLE" SINCE THE EARLY 1800'S, HOBO'S HAVE BEEN USING THEM TO GATHER FOR MEETINGS, WAIT FOR A TRAIN, OR LIVE FOR SHORT PERIODS SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, THERE'S A LARGE STEEL RING HERE THAT HAS BEEN USED AS A "FRISCO CIRCLE" SINCE 1890, THERE'S ALWAYS STACKED WOOD HERE, POTS AND PANS HANGING HERE, MIRRORS HANGING FROM THE TREE HERE, CANNED FOOD WRAPPED IN A PLASTIC SHEETING AND LOCKED IN AN OLD BATTERY BOX HERE. THE INHERITANCE OF THE ORIGINAL 1ST HOBO'S IS STILL ALIVE AND PRACTICED EVERY DAY HERE AND EVERYWHERE! AND EACH TRAIN CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER STOPS HERE, WE WERE WAITING FOR THE MISSOURI PACIFIC (ALTHOUGH LATER IT WOULD BECOME THE UNION PACIFIC) HERE AND

SURE ENOUGH IT STOPPED WITH A LONG LINE OF EMPTY AUTO CARRIERS HEADING BACK TO THE FORD PLANT IN ARLINGTON TEXAS. MY AIR CONDITIONED MOTOR HOME WAS GOING TO CHAUFFEUR ME WEST, SO CLIMBING ON BOARD AN EMPTY CAR I SPREAD OUT MY BEDROLL, LAID BACK AND WAITED FOR A LONG COMFORTABLE RIDE WEST.

AAAAAH, THE WEST, AND HERE WE GO, BACK TO PEOPLE DREAMING ABOUT BEING A COWBOY, AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT GUYS MY AGE WERE SUPPOSED TO DREAM ABOUT, THE STEREOTYPE OF A KID IN BLUE JEANS, WESTERN SHIRT, STRAW COWBOY HAT, LEATHERETTE GLOVES WITH A FRINGE ON THE SIDE, RIDING A BROOMSTICK HORSE, AND SHOOTING A CAP GUN. DOESN'T THAT SOUND FAMILIAR?, AND YET THE ACTUAL COWBOY ERA ONLY LASTED FOR 3 1/2 YEARS, THE ONLY REMAINING COWBOYS LEFT ARE WORKING WEST TEXAS RANCHES, OR IN MONTANA, WYOMING, OR TRIBAL AMERICAN LANDS, SIGHT UNSEEN. AND DON'T ASK ME ABOUT THE RODEOS, THAT'S JUST SHOWING OFF, REAL COWBOYING IS BETWEEN THE COWBOY, THE HORSE, AND THAT'S IT, BY THE SAME TOKEN REAL HOBOING IS NEVER IN THE PUBLIC EYE, YOU'LL SEE MOVIES AND T.V. SHOWS THAT FEATURE THE SUBJECT OF A HOBO WITH EXAGGERATED CLOTHES, TOO MUCH GREASEPAINT, AND SIFTED DIRT, TORN BLACK COATS THAT STILL HAVE THE HAGGAR LABEL ON THEM CLEARLY SEEN. AN OVERLY DARKENED 5 'O CLOCK SHADOW BEARD, DIRTY HANDS THAT STILL SHOW OFF FINELY MANICURED FINGERNAILS, AND THE BEDROLLS MADE OF HOLEY MISSION BLANKETS, NAAAAAH, THEY JUST CAN'T GET IT RIGHT.

WITH TIME I BEGAN THE ART OF "READING TRAINS," WHICH FEW HAVE GOTTEN THE KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE IN DOING, AND IF YOU HAVEN'T TRAVELED MUCH THIS ACTIVITY IS HARD TO ENACT, OR CONTEMPLATE, READING A TRAIN INVOLVES LOOKING FOR CARS THAT HAVE LOGOS OF BUSINESSES, SHIPPING POINTS, OR RAILROADS THAT ALWAYS GO TO DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES AND POINTS OF THE U.S. GOLDEN WEST BOXCARS, IF FOUND EMPTY IN THE EAST, WILL ALWAYS BE SHIPPED BACK WEST, MULTIPLE AUTO RACKS WILL GO BACK AND FORTH TO AUTOMOBILE COMPANIES IN CITIES LIKE CHICAGO, CLEVELAND ATLANTA, KANSAS CITY, DENVER, OR LOS ANGELES. HOPPER CARS (ALSO CALLED GRAIN CARS) ARE ALWAYS SENT BACK TO AGRICULTURAL AREAS LIKE ILLINOIS, INDIANA, IOWA, MINNESOTA, NEBRASKA, KANSAS, OR NORTH & SOUTH DAKOTA, GONDOLAS ARE SENT TO INDUSTRIAL CITIES LIKE PITTSBURGH, CLEVELAND, CHICAGO, ATLANTA, HOUSTON, LOS ANGELES, OR PORTLAND. REGULAR BOXCARS ARE SENT TO

LUMBER PRODUCING AREAS LIKE COLORADO, IDAHO, OREGON, OR WASHINGTON STATE, CENTER SPINE CARS CARRYING FINISHED LUMBER, GO TO STATES LIKE CALIFORNIA, & MONTANA, COAL CARS GO TO WYOMING, AND NORTH DAKOTA WHERE THE POWDER RIVER BASIN COAL MINE IS, AND ALSO GO TO UTAH IN THE TOWN OF HELPER TO BE DELIVERED TO THE UTAH RAILWAY. WHEN A TRAIN IS MADE UP THE LOCOMOTIVES LOOK DIFFERENT, IF THERE ARE SEVERAL LOCOMOTIVES STRUGGLING TOGETHER IT CAN BE A HEAVY LONG DISTANCE TRAIN, IF THERE'S 4 OR LESS LOCOMOTIVES THE TRAIN BECOMES A REGIONAL DELIVERY, IF THERE ARE 2 LOCOMOTIVES AND THEY HAVE FLASHING LIGHTS IT IS A LOCAL DELIVERY, OR THEY ARE SWITCH ENGINES. A TRAIN WITH A FLAG ON THE END COUPLER IS A LOCAL TRAIN, IF IT HAS A FLASHING LIGHT AT THE END (AN E.O.T.D./F.R.E.D, REFERRING TO AN END OF TRAIN DEVICE, OR A FORWARD RADIOING END DEVICE, ALSO CALLED FRED, OR THE FU@\$#%&ING REAR END DETECTOR) IT IS A MULTI CITY TRAIN, OFTEN A REGIONAL DELIVERY.

MANY PEOPLE DON'T KNOW HOW TO READ TRAINS AND END UP IN LOCATIONS THAT THEY NEVER WOULD GO TO, I'VE HEARD STORIES FROM SOME FOLKS I KNOW THAT TOLD ME THEY CAUGHT OUT FOR DENVER ON THE B.N. OUT OF KANSAS CITY, BUT ENDED UP BEING DELIVERED TO DALLAS TEXAS, OTHERS TOLD ME THEY WERE GOING TO CHICAGO, AND ENDED UP IN ST. LOUIS. ONE GUY TOLD ME HE CAUGHT A U.P. TRAIN FROM ELMHURST YARD TRYING TO GET TO EL PASO BUT THE TRAIN WAS DELIVERED TO NEW ORLEANS! READING TRAINS IS A PRACTICED ART, SIMILAR TO AN INVESTIGATION, OR A HOBBY, HOBO'S OFTEN GROUP TOGETHER WITH RAIL FANS TO GAIN INFORMATION, AND TO GIVE FREIGHT CAR RECORDS, SOMETIMES IT'S BORING BUT THIS IS ANOTHER WAY TO BLEND IN WITH THE LOCALS. AND IT ALSO IS A WAY TO MAKE CONTACTS FOR TRAIN INFORMATION THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE HARD TO COME BY, BESIDES A HOBO'S KNOWLEDGE OF RAILROADS CAN BE OF INTEREST TO THESE RAIL FANS (OFTEN CALLED RAILROAD FOAMERS) RABIDLY PROTECTIVE OF THE RAILROAD THEY ARE A FAN OF, CALLING IN ON TRAIN RIDERS EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE NOT A RAILROAD OFFICIAL. SO HOBO'S CONTINUE WITH THIS MASQUERADE AND OFTEN THE RAILFAN IS NONE THE WISER. MANY RAILROADS CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY HERALDS, OTHERS BY LOCOMOTIVE DESIGNS, STILL OTHERS CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY THE CHIME OF THE HORNS, EVEN WHEN THEY ARE AT A DISTANCE AWAY, AND THERE'S A LONGING FROM EACH SOUND THAT FILLS OUR HEARTS WHEN WE HEAR A TRAIN HORN ECHOING FROM A DISTANCE!

AS THE MISSOURI PACIFIC TRAIN ROLLED ACROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER I LOOKED DOWN AS A PUSH BOAT CHUGGED BY HEADING DOWN TO BATON ROUGE LOUISIANA AND SAW THE MEN WORKING ON THE BARGES, THEY LOOKED LIKE ANTS, AND THEN I REALIZED WHAT IT FEELS TO BE A BIRD, AN EAGLE, SOARING ACROSS THE SKY TOWARD THE HEAVENS, WINGING MY WAY ACROSS THE COUNTRY. I DREAMED A SPIRITUAL DREAM AS WE ROLLED THROUGH THE BOSTON MOUNTAINS TOWARD LITTLE ROCK AND THE ARKANSAS RIVER, A LARGE JUNGLE SAT AT THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK SIDE NEXT TO THE ROCK ISLAND YARD, BRINGING WITH ME 4 POUNDS OF PULLED PORK I BOUGHT IN MEMPHIS. A TRADITION THAT ALL HOBO'S PRACTICE WHEN COMING TO TOWN, AND AS I APPROACHED THE JUNGLE I HOLLERED OUT A GREETING, AND ASKED PERMISSION TO COME INSIDE IMMEDIATELY I WAS ANSWERED WITH AN ALL CLEAR AS LONG AS I HAD SOMETHING TO ADD TO THE FRISCO CIRCLE.

22
THE
AND



CHAPTER

DAY WAS
WARM
A LIGHT
BREEZE

BLOWING, WITH 23 OTHER PEOPLE IN THE JUNGLE MILLING ABOUT, I ASKED
WHAT WAS GOING ON AND WAS TOLD THE LOCAL POLICE WERE ROUNDING

EVERY STREET PERSON UP, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHO ROBBED A LOCAL LIQUOR STORE, IF I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO HARASS ME I SHOULD GET BACK ON A TRAIN AND LEAVE IN A HURRY. AT THIS POINT IT'S NOT TIME TO QUESTION WHAT IS GOING ON, JUST FOLLOW THE ADVICE AND GET GOING, DOWN IN ARKANSAS THE POLICE ARE QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN APPREHENDING CRIMINALS, HOWEVER THERE ARE A FEW COPS WHO GO OVERBOARD. WITH ANY CRIME AND INVESTIGATION THEY FEEL IT'S A REASON TO HARASS ANYONE THEY DON'T LIKE, AND QUITE OFTEN IT'S HOBO'S THEY HARASS, THEREFORE ANY ADVICE TO "MOVE ON DOWN THE LINE" IS QUICKLY HEEDDED, AND THIS IS WHAT I DID AT THAT MOMENT. BACK AT THE YARD OF MISSOURI PACIFIC I ENDURED THE HEAT OF SUMMER IN ARKANSAS, YEARS LATER I WOULD NEVER GRIPE ABOUT HEAT AND HUMIDITY IN THIS STATE, PREFERRING TO COME DOWN HERE FOR THE WINTER, LIKE MY MAMA I HATE THE SNOW, ICE, AND BLIZZARDS, YES, I'M NOT A MASOQUEST I COULD NEVER LIVE OUTSIDE WITH ANY COLD WEATHER AT MY PRESENT AGE! THIS TIME I FELT LIKE HEADING UP TO VAN BURN MAINLY BECAUSE THERE'S AN ALL ALCO RAILROAD HERE CALLED THE ARKANSAS & MISSOURI RAILROAD, (THE NAME ALCO STANDS FOR AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE COMPANY) THE CARS AND LOCOMOTIVES WERE USED AND FEATURED IN THE MOVIE BILOXI BLUES. THIS ORIGINALLY WAS THE ARKANSAS BRANCH OF THE "FRISCO" THAT VEERED OFF FROM THE MAINLINE AT MONETTE MISSOURI, AND RAN DOWN THROUGH SPRINGDALE, FAYETTEVILLE, VAN BUREN, INTO FT. SMITH ARKANSAS RUNNING THE SAME LITTLE PASSENGER TRAIN THAT STARTED OUT FIRST IN SPRINGFIELD MISSOURI. THAT SAME TRAIN THAT APPEARED IN THE MOVIE BILOXI BLUES, LATER THE RAILROAD CHANGED HANDS AND BECAME THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN, WHEN B.N. DECIDED TO EXPUNGE ITS EXCESS SIDE ROUTES THE RAILROAD WAS BOUGHT BY 6 MULTI-MILLIONAIRES WHO REINVIGORATED THE ROUTE.

THEY CREATED THE NAME AND DESIGN OF THE HERALD FOR THE RAILROAD, THE ARKANSAS & MISSOURI RAILROAD, AND STARTED RUNNING CAST OFF B.N. POWER, THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MULTI-MILLIONAIRE, RICHARD ANSHULTZ, WAS APPROACHED BY A HOBO IN FAYETTEVILLE AT A CAFE AND ENGAGED IN A CONVERSATION. RICHARD TOLD THE HOBO HE WANTED THIS RAILROAD TO BE UNIQUE, THE HOBO ASKED WHY HE DIDN'T USE ALCO POWER, RICHARD STATED HE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO PURCHASE ANY ALCO'S, THE HOBO TOLD HIM OF ALL THE ALCO'S IN CANADA AT THE MONTREAL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILROAD HAD CLOSED THEIR MONTREAL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS. HUNDREDS OF CANADIAN BUILT ALCO'S LAY IDLE, UNUSED, AND AVAILABLE FOR SALE, IF SOME COMPANY DIDN'T PURCHASE

THEM THE LOCOMOTIVES WOULD BE SCRAPPED, RICHARD APPROACHED THE AUTHORITIES IN MONTREAL AND BEGAN PURCHASING AND REALIZED HE HAD A RESOURCE IN WHO WOULD KNOW THE MOST ABOUT ALCO'S. SO HE HIRED THE HOBO TO BE HIS PURCHASING AGENT AND LOCOMOTIVE SPECIALIST. WHEN RICHARD WANTED TO START UP THE PASSENGER TRAIN AS AN EXCURSION HE REALIZED WHO WOULD BEST KNOW ABOUT THE REBUILDING OF THE PASSENGER CARS, THE SAME HOBO'S WHO RODE THE RODS, BLINDS, AND ROOFS OF THE SAME PASSENGER TRAINS SO MANY YEARS AGO, HE CALLED HIS HOBO EMPLOYEE PARTNER AND ASKED HIM TO PUT OUT THE WORD THAT THE ARKANSAS & MISSOURI NEEDED HOBO'S TO REBUILD THE PASSENGER TRAIN TO RUN AS AN EXCURSION TRAIN. THEY CAME BY THE HUNDREDS, CAMPING IN THE WOODS AND FOREST NORTH OF SPRINGDALE, WORKING DAY LABOR TO FEED THEMSELVES WHILE BECOMING ARKANSAS & MISSOURI EMPLOYEES AND REBUILT THAT PASSENGER TRAIN, THE SAME TRAIN THAT APPEARED IN THE MOVIE BILOXI BLUES. THE SAME PASSENGER TRAIN THAT IS THE EXCURSION TRAIN THAT RUNS THE ROUTE NORTH THROUGH THE WHITE RIVER INTO BRANSON MISSOURI TODAY. AND OUR GOVERNMENT TRIES TO GET YOU TO BELIEVE THAT HOBO'S DON'T DO ANYTHING WORTHWHILE, GOD ARE YOU ALL MISINFORMED! IT IS WELL KNOWN AMONG HOBO'S THAT SEVERAL OF OUR NUMBER HAVE BEEN HIRED BY RAILROADS BECAUSE OF OUR INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF RAILROAD OPERATIONS, OR FREIGHT CARS AND LOCOMOTIVES, WE SPEND MORE TIME AROUND THEM THAN THE ACTUAL RAILROAD EMPLOYEES!

WALTER BUSHING (BUSH MAN) IS A CHEIF FREIGHT CAR INSPECTOR FOR KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN WORKING IN THE CAR SHOPS AT PITTSBURGH KANSAS. BUT HE STARTED HIS LIFE AS A HOBO, RIDING BETWEEN SHREVEPORT LOUISIANA AND HEAVENER OKLAHOMA, HIS JOB WAS TO FIGHT WILD FIRES IN BOTH THE STATE AND NATIONAL FORESTS, QUITE A DEMANDING JOB, ONE DAY, DURING A BREAK FROM THE HOT, SWEATY JOB WALTER SPIED A FREIGHT CAR THAT COULD HAUL PULPWOOD AND GOT THE IDEA TO CUT THE FIRE BREAKS AND SHIP THE EXCESS WOOD TO DEQUEEN OKLAHOMA TO MILL FLOORING FOR OTHER BOXCARS. IN TIME HE BEGAN DESIGNING DIFFERENT LUMBER CARS, AS WELL AS CARS THAT CARRY ONLY MOLDING WHICH IS USED TO LINE THE BOTTOM OF WALLS AT THE FLOORLINE WHEN RENOVATING A HOUSE. HIS DESIGNS WERE SO SUCCESSFUL THAT THEY WERE MASS PRODUCED. EVERY LUMBER COMPANY SHIPPED WITH THEM ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, AS WELL AS CANADA, AND MEXICO ALL THE WAY INTO SOUTH AMERICA. ROLLING ON RAILROADS LIKE UNION PACIFIC, B.N.S.F, C.S.X, NORFOLK SOUTHERN,

FLORIDA EAST COAST, CANADIAN PACIFIC, CANADIAN NATIONAL, FERRO CARRIL DE MEXICO NACIONAL, (FREIGHT CARRIER MEXICO NATIONAL), SUD AL PACIFICO DE MEXICO, (SOUTHERN PACIFIC OF MEXICO), AND FERRO CARRIL DE CENTRO DE CANAL PANAMA (THE PANAMA CANAL RAILWAY) TO NAME A FEW!

A LADY HOBO NAMED CHERYL KRAKOW (4TH GENERATION POLISH WHO WENT BY THE ROAD NAME - "KRAKY") STARTED HER LIFE AS AN ELECTRICIAN, LEARNING THIS PROFESSION FROM HER FATHER SHE TRAVELED ACROSS WYOMING WIRING TRIBAL AMERICANS HOMES SOMETIMES FOR PAY, BUT MOSTLY FOR BARTER. SHE ALSO BECAME A HOBO MAINLY (AS SHE SAID) TO GET AROUND STATE TO STATE AT NO COST, THEN ONE DAY SHE DECIDED TO TRAVEL OUT TO MINNIEHOPELESS MINNESOTA (GIVE ME A BREAK, I ENJOY JOKING ABOUT THIS TOWN, AND SOMETIMES IT DOES SEEM HOPELESS!) TO FIND WORK ON INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICAL PROJECTS. SEEING AN ADVERTISEMENT TO WORK FOR THE MINNEAPOLIS TRANSIT SYSTEM SHE APPLIED AND BEGAN WORK ON THE NEW (AT THAT TIME) MINNEAPOLIS LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM, NOW AFTER 9 YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT, USING THE KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM HOBOING TO WORK, SHE IS THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT ON THE MINNEAPOLIS LIGHT RAIL, SHE EVEN SITS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN THE LOCAL ELECTRICIANS UNION. DIDN'T I SAY HOBO'S WERE INDUSTRIOUS?, YOU SHOULD LISTEN AND BELIEVE!, SO OUT OF ARKANSAS I RODE THE A&M UP TO MISSOURI TO DO AGRICULTURAL CROP LABOR. I IMMEDIATELY I RAN INTO A FEW OF THE HOBO'S I KNEW FROM LAMPASSAS, AND THE JUNGLE BEHIND THE GANDY DANCER CAMP CAR THAT I GREW UP IN, WHICH BOTH MY MOTHER AND I CALLED HOME!

SPEEDY SAID HE KNEW ONION JOHN WELL ENOUGH TO TRUST HIM WHEN HE SAID THERE'S GOOD PAYING WORK IN CHILLICOTHE MISSOURI, SO WE HEADED OUT OF VAN BUREN FOR MONETT ON THE FRISCO, NIGHT TIME RIDING, AND MADE IT TO "THE LITTLE MO" (A BRANCH OF THE MISSOURI RIVER) BY 1:30 AM AND CAUGHT A LOCAL ON THE B.N. THAT WE KNEW WOULD TURN NORTH AT THE PRIEST CITY TURN, AT THAT POINT WE STOPPED TO PICK UP A STRING GOING UP TO CARTHAGE MO. IN CARTHAGE WE GOT OFF THE TRAIN AND HEADED FOR THE WHITE RIVER WHERE WE WOULD JUNGLE OUT UNTIL AN EAST BOUND MILWAUKEE ROAD WOULD STOP TO DO WORK WITH BOTH THE MISSOURI & NORTH ARKANSAS, AND THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN BEFORE HEADING EAST TO CHILLICOTHE. IN THE JUNGLE IS A PLACE ALONG THE RIVER

WHERE CATTAILS GROW, THIS WAS THE TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN THEY WOULD POLLENATE. CATTAIL POLLEN IS VERY FINE, AS FINE AS SIFTED FLOUR, VERY HIGH IN PROTEIN, VITAMIN A, VITAMIN B, AND VITAMIN E, AND HAS A DARK BROWN COLOR, SPEEDY TOLD ME HE WOULDN'T USE IT BECAUSE IT MADE HIS PANCAKES LOOK LIKE COW PATTIES, BUT I NEVER LISTENED, I KNEW HOW FLAVORFUL THEY WERE, AND HOW BENEFICIAL THE INGREDIENTS WERE TO A HOBO'S HEALTH! BY EARLY THAT NEXT DAY THE HUMMINGBIRDS WERE THICK IN THE SUMMER DOGWOOD TREES, FLYING FROM FLOWER TO FLOWER, AND LOOKING LIKE GIANT MOSQUITOES, AND A TRAIN ON THE MILWAUKEE ROAD WAS SPOTTED AS IT SOUNDED ITS HORNS, THE RIDE WE WERE WAITING FOR, HEADING FOR CHILLICOTHE, THE FIRST WORD IN THE NAME CHILLICOTHE IMPLIES THAT THE TOWN CAN BE CHILLY, BUT NOT IN THE SUMMER. AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR CHILLICOTHE IS EXTREMELY HOT AND HUMID, NO BREEZES, A STEADY SUN SHINNING HIGH AND BEARING DOWN ON ANYBODY, ESPECIALLY THE FOLKS LIKE ME AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL LABORERS IN THE FIELDS. THIS SUCKS ALL THE NUTRIENTS AND ENERGY FROM YOUR BODY, AND YOU WALK HOME LOOKING LIKE THE LIVING DEAD, EVERY NIGHT WE ELECTED ONE OF US HOBO'S TO GO INTO TOWN TO BUY SUPPLIES, THIS TIME WE ELECTED "THE POTATO PIRATE," AFTER 5 HOURS OF HIM BEING GONE WE BECAME WORRIED ABOUT HIM, AND WENT LOOKING FOR HIM, THINKING HE CAME TO GRIEF FROM ONE OF THE "TOWNIES" WE FOUND HIM IN A LOCAL BAR DRINKING UP ALL OF OUR HARD EARNED, AND SWEATED FOR PROFITS.

NOW THIS MADE ALL OF US QUITE MAD, MAD ENOUGH TO CHEW NAILS AND SPIT BULLETS (ONLY JOKING, BUT YOU UNDERSTAND THE MOOD) SO THE 5 OF US WENT BACK TO OUR JUNGLE, WITH 1 OF US QUITE INEBRIATED AS WELL AS UNWILLING, AND HAD A HOBO COURT. (OF COURSE YOUR SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY CALLS IT A KANGAROO COURT, WONDER HOW THEY CAME UP WITH THAT NAME?) WE SECURED THE OFFENDING HOBO TO A TREE CENTRALLY LOCATED AT OUR JUNGLE AND THE 4 OF US BEGAN A DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW TO PUNISH THE OFFENDER, THE OTHER 3 HOBO'S BEGAN A DISCUSSION ON A ROUND OF "THIS" AND "THAT" TRYING TO DECIDE THE BEST IMPRESSION TO MAKE THAT WOULD CONVINCE THE OFFENDER NOT TO REPEAT HIS MISTAKE ANYWHERE ELSE. AFTER ABOUT 5-10 MINUTES OF THIS BACK AND FORTH DISCUSSION I REACHED MY LIMIT, NO LONGER DESIRING TO HEAR TALK I OBTAINED A BOXCAR BRAKE HOSE AND BEGAN BEATING THE OFFENDER, I PUT EVERY EMOTION AND EVERY FEELING OF RAGE INTO THIS BEATING. EVERY TIME I REMEMBERED OTHER HOBO'S BEING ROBBED OF WHAT LITTLE THEY WORKED FOR FROM SUN UP TO SUN DOWN, EVERY TIME A LEECH HID AMONG

US TO DEFER POLICE ATTENTION IN ANOTHER DIRECTION, EVERY HOBO THAT HAS EVER BEEN LIED TO BY THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY OR ANOTHER HOBO. I STARTED MUTTERING AND CURSING UNDER MY BREATH, I STARTED SPITTING AND GROWLING, I GUESS I SOUNDED LIKE AN ENRAGED BIGFOOT, AND THIS DREW THE WIDE EYED ATTENTION OF THE OTHER 3 HOBO'S, WHEN I FELT THAT THE BEATING WAS ENOUGH I DROPPED MY ARMS, NOW FEELING LIKE LEAD. THE OTHER 3 HOBO'S, THE ACTUAL HIERARCHY OF THE JUNGLE, UNTIED THE OFFENDER AND TOLD HIM "STAY OFF THE ROAD AND STAY OFF THE TRAINS, WE ARE WELL TRAVELED, IF WE SEE YOU ON THE ROAD ANYWHERE WE'LL TAKE YOU SOMEWHERE THAT NO-ONE WILL FIND YOU." THEN THEY GAVE HIM A SINGLE MATCH, TO OLDTIME HOBO'S THIS MEANS "GO START YOUR OWN JUNGLE," AFTER THIS ACT, AND THE ACTION OF THE OFFENDER WALKING OFF TO FOLLOW THE DECISION, THE OLDER HOBO'S TOLD ME "WE SHOULD HAVE HAD A CAMERA, YOU WERE FIREY RED, YOU HAD SMOKE COMING OUT OF YOUR EARS, AND YOU WERE MAKING WILD ANIMAL SOUNDS, FROM NOW ON WHOEVER SEES YOU WILL CALL YOU THE TEXAS MADMAN."

MANY PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME THEY DON'T LIKE MY ROAD NAME AND THAT I OUGHT TO CHANGE IT, BUT THAT'S NOT AS EASY AS IT SOUNDS, FOR HOBO'S - WE FOLLOW TRADITIONS, THAT'S AN ANTIQUATED WAY OF LIVING ISN'T IT?, BUT OTHER PEOPLE, AND CULTURES DO THIS TOO, IT'S A PART OF THEIR INHERITANCE THE SAME WAY IT'S A PART OF THE HOBO INHERITANCE. THIS TRADITION STATES THAT IF 3 OR MORE HOBO'S GIVE YOU A ROAD NAME IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE THE ROAD NAME YOU HAVE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR ROAD NAME YOU MUST SEARCH FOR THE HOBO'S THAT GRANTED YOU YOUR ROAD NAME. AND ASK THAT IT BE CHANGED, THEY WILL THEN CONFER ON WHAT NEW ROAD NAME TO GIVE YOU, OR VOTE ON THE NEW ROAD NAME YOU MIGHT HAVE PICKED OUT, IF THEY VOTE AND STATE THAT THEY LIKE YOUR CHOICE, AND GIVE PERMISSION FOR YOU TO RENAME YOURSELF THEN, AND ONLY THEN WILL YOUR ROAD NAME BE CHANGED. KIND OF POLITICAL ISN'T IT?, BUT MANY COUNTRIES HAVE BASED THEIR POLITICS ON TRADITIONS, THUS THEIR HISTORY AND POLITICAL SYSTEM ARE COMBINED, TRADITIONS ARE IMPORTANT, I BELIEVE IN TRADITIONS AND TRY TO LIVE BY THEM EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE, THUS KEEPING THE HOBO HISTORY ALIVE, AND ENSURING IT WILL BE PASSED ON, AND WRITTEN DOWN, CATALOGED FOR HISTORY TO RECORD IT SO OTHER PEOPLE CAN USE IT TO MEASURE THEIR PROGRESS BY!

WHILE WRITING THIS PARAGRAPH I'M SITTING IN MY APARTMENT, IN AIR CONDITIONING, WATCHING BONES ON T.V. AND REMEMBERING HOW HOT IT WAS IN MISSOURI THAT YEAR, WEATHER PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART OF LIFE ON THE ROAD, NOT EVERYBODY HAS THE BENEFIT OF A SMART PHONE, OR GOING TO THE LIBRARY TO USE THE INTERNET, WATCHING THE SKIES DOES AS GOOD A JOB IN PREDICTING THE WEATHER AS LISTENING TO YOUR LOCAL WEATHER MAN. WINDS FROM THE EAST WITH DARKENED CLOUDS MEANS TORNADOES ARE NEAR, WARM WINDS FROM THE SOUTH MEANS HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM EFFECTS AND STRONG WINDS. WINDS FROM THE WEST BRINGS RAIN, WINDS FROM THE NORTH CALLS FOR COLDER WEATHER, POSSIBLY SNOW, A HOBO CAN TELL THE WEATHER WITHOUT MODERN ELECTRONICS SIMPLY FROM WATCHING THE SKIES AND LOOKING FOR SIGNS, THIS USED TO BE A NORMAL ACTIVITY FOR YOUR SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY! SOMEWHERE YOU LOST THAT ABILITY AND DEPEND ON THE T.V, NEWSPAPER, RADIO, OR INTERNET, WE HOBO'S PRACTICE SOMETHING MORE ACCURATE, AND IT UPHOLDS A TRADITION, A PRACTICED ART FORM, IT'S AN INHERITANCE, AND NO PRICE TAG CAN BE ATTACHED TO IT!!! WATCHING FOR THINGS IS AN ACT OF OBSERVATION, THE SAME AS WHAT IS DONE BY SOLDIERS ON RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS FOR INTELLIGENCE FROM THE BATTLEFIELD, AND WHAT TRULY IS A BATTLEFIELD?, IS IT A PLACE FOR MILITARIES TO WREAK HAVOC UPON EACH OTHER AND PROVE THEIR SUPERIORITY OVER THE OTHERS MILITARY, POLITICS, GOVERNMENT, AND CULTURE? OR IS THAT BATTLEFIELD A PLACE CLOSER TO HOME WHERE A GROUP OF PEOPLE FIGHT FOR RECOGNITION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALITY AS A PEOPLE AND A NATION TOTALLY SEPARATE FROM THE HOST NATION THEY LIVE IN? MANY AMERICAN TRIBAL CITIZENS FIGHT FOR THEIR RECOGNITION EVERY DAY! A TRIBE CALLED THE YUAPI WHO LIVE ON AN ISLAND IN THE RIO GRANDE RIVER BETWEEN TEXAS AND MEXICO AND HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR THEIR INDIVIDUALITY AS A GROUP OF TRIBAL AMERICANS FOR THE PAST 93 YEARS, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOT GRANTED THEM TRIBAL STATUS, BUT THEY PERSEVERE TO BE RECOGNIZED. HOBO'S HAVE BEEN DOING THIS FOR OVER 200 YEARS, I HAVE BEEN A WITNESS TO THIS FIGHT WE ENDURE FOR THE PAST 64 YEARS, WE DON'T ASK FOR TAX FREE STATUS, NOR MILITARY AID, NOR FINANCIAL REPARATIONS, JUST RECOGNITION, MUCH THE SAME AS THE YUAPI, AND YET WE ARE REFUSED, IT DOESN'T MEAN THE BATTLE IS OVER. LIKE THE YUAPI WE ENDEAVOR TO PERSEVERE, JUST THE SAME AS OUR PERSEVERING IN FARM FIELDS DAILY, OR INDUSTRIES, OR SOCIAL SERVICES THAT WE SUPPLY TO NON-HOBO CITIZENS! THE U.S. TRIES TO BE EXCLUSIVE, AND I'VE EXPERIENCED THAT EXCLUSIVENESS MANY TIMES AS I TRAVELED AND LIVED ON THE ROAD.

AFTER LEAVING CHILlicothe I TRAVELED UP TO ST. LOUIS AND AFTER BAILING FROM THE TRAIN SOUTH OF THE ANHAUSER BUSCH BREWERY I RODE A CITY BUS UP TO A SHOPPING MALL NEXT TO THE AMTRAK STATION. THERE'S A STEAK HOUSE THAT I USED TO WORK AT GRILLING STEAK AND RIBS, AND I NEVER FELT OUT OF PLACE, UNTIL THIS YEAR, THE CUSTOMERS NEVER COME IN THE KITCHEN WHERE FOOD PREPARATION IS ACCOMPLISHED, BUT AFTER MY SHIFT WAS FINISHED I KEPT HEARING THE COMMENTS "I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY EMPLOY THOSE NASTY PEOPLE WHO RIDE TRAINS HERE," AND THEY WERE VERY AUDIBLE EVEN AFTER I WALKED IN FRONT OF THEM, THAT IS UNTIL I PUT ON MY MILITARY VETERANS CAP! THEN THEY WERE VERY COMPLEMENTARY THANKING ME FOR MY SERVICE, PRAISING THE MILITARY COMPANIES THAT WENT TO BATTLE FOR THEIR FREEDOMS, I COULD HAVE UNLOADED A STRING OF EPHETETS, AND CURSED THEM FOR BEING TWO FACED HYPOCRITES BUT THAT WOULD GIVE THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WERE RIGHT ABOUT HOBO'S, SO I LET IT GO.

CHAPTER 23

I NEVER COULD RELATE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ONE OF THE MANY REASONS I ALWAYS RETURNED TO THE JUNGLE IS HAVING A CLOSER RELATION TO THE CITIZENS OF THE HOBO NATION, (NOT THE POLITICAL HOBO COUNCIL IN BRITT) I ALWAYS STAYED WITH MY OWN PEOPLE WHO ARE ALSO MY FAMILY, AND YET WE WERE ALWAYS INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL TO ANY NON-HOBO WHO WOULD VENTURE DOWN TO OUR NATION. WE WELCOMED EVERYONE MUCH LIKE THE U.S. USED TO DO AT ELLIS ISLAND IN NEW YORK STATE, OUR JUNGLE HOME WAS, AND IS OUR ELLIS ISLAND, BUT NOBODY IS REFUSED FROM COMING TO US LIKE THE U.S. HAS BEEN DOING AS OF LATE WITH IMMIGRATION REFORMS THAT WERE PUT IN PLACE IN THE PAST 20-30 YEARS. LIKE THE U.S. WE WILL NATURALIZED YOU, GIVING YOU BOTH A HISTORICAL EDUCATION ALONG WITH A LIVING EDUCATION, WE WILL TEST YOU

CONSTANTLY, AND GIVE YOU YOUR CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP WHEN WE GIVE YOU YOUR ROAD NAME! WE WILL DO ALL THIS BECAUSE WE ARE A NATION WITHIN A NATION AND NO ONE CAN TRULY REFUTE THIS STATEMENT BECAUSE WE OF THE HOBO NATION CAN PROVE THIS BY EXAMPLE!

AT AGE 17 I FELT LIKE JOINING THE MILITARY SERVICE, SPECIFICALLY THE ARMY, AND I SAW THAT THE HOBO LIFE I GREW UP IN SERVED ME AND MY FELLOW SERVICEMEN WELL IN ALL OUR ORDERED OPERATIONS, MUCH OF MY PAST LIFE OF HOBOING DEALT WITH LIVING IN THE WOODS AND FIELDS, CATCHING AND COOKING WILDLIFE, AND USING ROOTS, AND BERRIES AS A FOOD SOURCE. MY DRILL SERGEANT, ROBERT DINKINS, TOLD ME THAT WHAT I WAS DOING COULD CONCEAL ME IN A FUTURE COMBAT SITUATION, AND THAT I SHOULD SHARE AND INSTRUCT THE TRAINEES IN THIS ACTIVITY, HE ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD NEVER SEEN ANYBODY PRACTICE THIS LIFESTYLE SINCE HE HAD VISITED HIS GRANPARENTS! MY RESPONSE TO HIM WAS MUCH THE SAME AS I HAVE COVERED IN THE 1ST 2 CHAPTERS OF THIS BOOK, BUT I HOPE I INTIMATED TO HIM THAT THIS IS NOT JUST A LIFESTYLE, BUT AN INHERITANCE, THIS IS STILL THE SUBJECT I TRY TO TELL YOU NOW, THE HOBO LIFE IS AN INTERGENERATIONAL INHERITANCE. PASSED DOWN FROM PARENT TO CHILD, AND SO FORTH, WHILE IN TRAINING I WAS CALLED UPON BY SERGEANT DINKINS TO INSTRUCT THE TRAINEES IN CAMAFLOGE, OBSERVATION, INTELLIGENCE GATHERING, AND MARKSMANSHIP. FROM AGE 8 I WAS AROUND OLDER HOBO'S WHO HAD FOUGHT IN W.W.-2, KOREA, AND VIETNAM, EACH HOBO WAS WELL VERSED IN LONG RANGE RECONISANCE TACTICS, AND ALL OF THAT WAS A PART OF MY INHERITANCE, THEY USED THESE TECHNIQUES WHILE HOBOING AND I FOLLOWED SUIT. SO WHEN MY DRILL SERGEANT ASKED ME TO AID HIM IN FIELD INSTRUCTION I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE, MANY OF THE TRAINEES WERE FROM INNER-CITY AREAS AROUND WASHINGTON D.C, RALEIGH N.C, ATLANTA, CHICAGO, NEW ORLEANS, AND OTHER MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS, AND THEY RESISTED THE INSTRUCTIONS I DICTATED TO THEM AS WELL AS THE EXAMPLES, BUT WITH THE DRILL SERGENT'S CONSTANT ORDERS I WAS ABLE TO SUCCEED. AFTER GRADUATION MY DRILL SERGEANT ASKED ME WHAT BRANCH I WANTED TO JOIN IN THE ARMY SO I TOLD HIM 101ST AIRBORNE, HIS RESPONSE WAS TYPICAL, "WHY WOULD ANYBODY WANT TO JUMP OUT OF A PERFECTLY GOOD AIRPLANE?"

STILL THAT'S WHAT I WAS AIMING FOR, SO I WAS SENT TO FT. BRAGG WHERE I UNDER WENT JUMP SCHOOL, THE 1ST TIME I DIDN'T JUMP, I WAS PUSHED

OUT OF THE PLANE BY MY INSTRUCTOR AND IMMEDIATELY FELL IN LOVE WITH IT, TRUE I WAS FALLING AT 180 MPH BUT THE FEELING WAS LIKE BEING AN EAGLE. I ENJOYED THE SENSATION OF WEIGHTLESSNESS AS THE GROUND WAS LOOMING CLOSER, AND I PULLED MY PARACHUTE RELEASE 50 FEET FROM "THE DECK," (THIS IS A POINT TO WATCH FOR, A BIT IMAGINARY, AS IF YOU'RE USING THE DECK OF A SHIP FOR A SAFETY MEASUREMENT) THIS BROUGHT A VERY LOUD CURSING AND SCOLDING FROM MY INSTRUCTOR, BUT I WAS HOOKED, WHEN I'M IN THE AIR IT'S ME AND THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD, I'M FREE TO SOAR AND ENJOY THE ULTIMATE FREEDOM OF FLYING. AFTER GRADUATION FROM JUMP SCHOOL I WAS SENT TO FT. CAMPBELL, AND ATTACHED TO THE FAMOUS "NIGHT STALKERS" (A BRANCH OF SPECIAL FORCES "A" & "B" TEAMS) AND FROM THIS POINT I CAN TELL YOU NO MORE, AFTER 10 YEARS OF SERVICE I WAS FLOWN TO ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, TAKEN TO BOTH THE LOWER LEVEL 6 OF THE "G" RING IN THE PENTAGON AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY OFFICE IN GAITHERSBURG MARYLAND, I SWORE THE SAME OATH THAT THE PRESIDENT SWEARS, AND SIGNED A NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT. THE PENALTY FOR VIOLATING SUCH AN AGREEMENT IS THAT I WILL BE PUT BACK IN UNIFORM, TAKEN TO WASHINGTON D.C, TRIED AT A JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL COURT, CONVICTED, AND SENT TO THE DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS AT FT. LEAVENWORTH KANSAS, THIS MILITARY PRISON IS KNOWN AS "THE CASTLE" AND HAS DREARY GRAY STONE WALLS. I ENJOY MY FREEDOM TOO MUCH TO VIOLATE THE N.D.A!

IN THE PAST MANY YEARS I HAVE VISITED OTHER FELLOW SOLDIERS INCARCERATED WITHIN THE CASTLE AND I'M HERE TO TELL YOU THAT THE PUNISHMENT IS AS HORRIBLE AS CAN BE IMAGINED, MILITARY PUNISHMENT IS AS FAR REMOVED FROM CIVIL PUNISHMENT, FROM WHAT I SAW WHEN VISITING THE DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS I CAN SAY FOR SURE THAT I NEVER WANT TO SPEND AN HOUR BEHIND THOSE WALLS, LET ALONE LIFE! THERE'S A MORNING RITUAL: REVELEE AT 3:00 AM, UP OUT OF YOUR BUNK WITH IT MADE UP TO MILITARY STANDARDS, OUT OF YOUR CELL, STAND AT ATTENTION, NO TALKING, THE HALL CORPORAL AND BLOCK CAPTAIN WILL INSPECT YOU, YOUR CELL, AND BUNK. IF ALL IS CORRECT YOU WAIT UNTIL THE ORDER IS GIVEN AND MARCH TO CHOW, IF IT IS NOT, YOU GET NO CHOW, AND ARE MADE TO SCRUB YOUR CELL WITH A TOOTHBRUSH, 2 M.P'S WILL STAND OVER YOU WITH LEATHER STRAPS TO REMIND YOU WHO'S IN CHARGE! YOU GET NO VISITATION EXCEPT FROM YOUR J.A.G. LAWYER, THERE'S NO INTERNET, NO LIBRARY, NO WEIGHT ROOM, ONLY AN EXERCISE YARD WITH THE SAME GRAY STONE WALLS,

AND M.P'S STATIONED 2 FEET APART, WITH M-16'S TRAINED ON YOU, THEY WILL SHOOT! DON'T SAY THIS IS ILLEGAL, THIS IS MILITARY PRISON, FEDERAL PRISON IS A COUNTRY CLUB, STATE PRISON IS A HIGH SCHOOL, AND COUNTY JAIL IS LIKE KINDERGARTEN, OR ROMPER ROOM!, NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I WILL NEVER VIOLATE MY NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT?

AFTER MY MILITARY SERVICE I ATTEMPTED TO BECOME "A CITIZEN" MUCH TO MY DETRIMENT, TOO MANY YEARS SPENT IN THE OPEN SPOILED ME FROM TRYING TO BE A CITIZEN, SINCE MY EXIT FROM THE ARMY IN 1987, AND MY EVENTUAL RETURN TO MY FAMILY (THE HOBO'S) I'VE NEVER REGRETTED A SECOND AND HAVE WITNESSED MANY MEN THAT I SERVED WITH BECOME HOBO'S AS WELL. ENDURING OUR NATURIZATION PROCESS NONE OF THEM COMPLAINED ONE IOTA, AND FINALLY RECEIVING THEIR ROAD NAME WAS A BADGE OF PRIDE, IT WAS LESS FINANCIAL AND MORE SPIRITUAL BEING WORTHY TO BECOME A PART OF OUR NATION. AND SO AFTER FINISHING THE MILITARY SERVICE I TRAVELED THE LOWER 48 FOR SEVERAL YEARS EVERYWHERE, AND ALTHOUGH I NEVER HAD AN ADDRESS I ALWAYS HAD A HOME, OFTEN WHEN ASKED I ECHOED THE LINES OF A DR. JOHN SONG "ANYWHERE I LAY MY HAT IS HOME" WHICH IS HARD FOR MOST PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND. QUITE OFTEN THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY PARROTS "HOMELESS" WHEN REFERRING TO ANYONE WHO AIMLESSLY WANDERS THE STREETS AND STATES, BUT THIS CATCHPHRASE IS USED TOO OFTEN TO MEAN EVEN HOBO'S BECAUSE THAT SOCIETY DOESN'T RECOGNIZE THE HOBO NATION. I USUALLY TELL THEM "I'M A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, SO ANYWHERE I LAY DOWN AT NIGHT IS MY HOME, IF I HAD NO CITIZENSHIP, NOR COUNTRY, TO LIVE IN, ONLY THEN WOULD I BE TRULY HOMELESS!" AND DO I GET THE STARES FROM MANY AFTER MAKING THAT COMMENT! SEVERAL TIMES I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE SAY "WELL YOU'VE BEEN SCREWED," MOSTLY BY FOLKS THAT HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN ONE TOWN OR CITY, BUT THE MISCONCEPTION HERE IS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT INTENDS YOU TO STAY IN ONE PLACE ALL OF YOUR LIFE, STAGNATING AS YOU NEVER LEAVE TO KNOW THE SCENES AND PLEASURES BEYOND THE HORIZON.

TO ME THIS IS ANOTHER WASTE OF LIFE BEING, BASICALLY, BRAINWASHED INTO LIVING IN THE SAME PLACE, WORKING THE SAME JOB, WALKING THE SAME STREETS, NEVER KNOWING THE EXCITEMENT OF LIVING WITH YOUR FACE IN THE WIND, AND THE ONLY EXCITEMENT YOU'LL KNOW IS FROM MOVIES, T.V.

SHOWS, OR THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS, OR LIVING THROUGH YOUR FRIENDS VACATION TRIPS. BEING FORCED INTO STAGNATION BY FOLLOWING THE OLD TIRED NORM AND STANDARD INSTEAD OF BEING ALLOWED LIFE LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS AS PROMISED IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS, TOO MANY PEOPLE WOULD RATHER BE BRAINWASHED THAN TAKE A CHANCE THAT THEIR DREAMS MIGHT BE REALIZED IF THEY PACK UP AND JOIN THE HOBO NATION.

THE F.T.R.A. WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOBO'S FOR SEVERAL YEARS BECAUSE OF MISIDENTIFICATION THROUGH A FAULTY REFERENCE PERSON, A FORMER POLICE DETECTIVE BASED IN SPOKANE WASHINGTON WHOSE NAME IS ROBERT GRANDENETTI, THIS DETECTIVE (AND I USE THAT WORD LOOSELY) WAS INVESTIGATING SEVERAL "TRACKSIDE MURDERS" AND WAS UNABLE TO RESOLVE THE MATTER. HIS INVESTIGATIVE STYLE WAS TO CANVAS THE TRACKSIDE AREA AND TALK TO WHOMEVER HE MET THAT MADE A HABIT OF HANGING AROUND, RAILROAD EMPLOYEES, CITIZENS LIVING NEAR THE RAILROAD, ETC, HIS CANVASING BROUGHT HIM IN CONTACT WITH HOBO'S JUNGLED AT CATCH OUT LOCATIONS. ROBERT ALSO OBSERVED HOBO MONIKERS DRAWN ON PILLARS UNDER THE MANY BRIDGES THAT CROSSED THE B.N. AND U.P. TRACKS SEVERAL OF THESE MONIKERS HAD THE INITIALS F.T.R.A. INCLUDED IN LOCATIONS BENEATH THE MONIKERS, HE HAD NEVER SEEN THIS ETCHING BEFORE BUT TRIED TO DECIPHER THE INITIALS WITH NO PAST FRAME OF REFERENCE.

THE F.T.R.A. STARTED OUT IN THE LATE 1990'S AFTER A GROUP OF HOBO'S, KNOWN AS THE ORIGINAL 13, GATHERED TOGETHER IN HAVRE MONTANA IN A JUNGLE ALONG THE MILK RIVER, THESE 13 HOBO'S WERE FROM VARIED BACKGROUNDS, AND WERE MILITARY VETERANS. WHOSE SERVICE RANGED FROM MID W.W.-2, THROUGH THE LAST DAYS OF VIETNAM, I ONLY KNEW A FEW OF THESE GENTLEMEN AND WOMEN, DANTE FUCWHA, FROG, DAN'L BOONE, SHOT DOWN WILLS, DOGMAN TONY, DEBBIE BOONE, K.Y, HORIZONTAL JOHN, AND JOSHUA LONG GONE, THE OTHER 4 I'VE NEVER MET! KNOWING THE HORRIBLE TREATMENT THAT VETERANS, WHO WERE AND ARE HOBO'S, WERE RECEIVING BY THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION THESE HOBO'S DECIDED TO ORGANIZE IN PROTEST TO THAT ADMINISTRATION, AND THEY VOTED ON THE INITIALS TO REFER TO THEMSELVES - F.T.R.A. - THE INITIALS STOOD FOR FUCK THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION. WITHIN SEVERAL DAYS OF DISCUSSION THE ORIGINAL 13 REALIZED THAT SOMEONE WOULD SEE THESE

INITIALS AND USE THEM FOR A PURPOSE OTHER THAN WHAT WAS INTENDED, REALIZING THEY HAD NO CONTROL OVER THEIR STATED IDEA THE ORIGINAL 13 DISBANDED THE F.T.R.A. 21 DAYS AFTER ITS CREATION. BUT THE DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE, HAVRE IS A HEAVILY TRAVELED TOWN, SOME YOUNG HOBO'S HEARD OF THE GROUP F.T.R.A. THAT WAS BEING ORGANIZED AND DECIDED TO USE THESE INITIALS FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSE, SPREADING THE INITIALS ALL OVER THE NORTHWESTERN UNITED STATES. NOW CALLING THEMSELVES FREIGHT TRAIN RIDERS OF AMERICA THIS PERVERSION OF THE ORIGINAL IDEA SPREAD ALL OVER, A TEMPETEST OUT OF CONTROL. ROBERT GRANDENETTI SAW THESE INITIALS AND FIGURED THEY WOULD SUFFICE AS A SCAPEGOAT, PUTTING THE BLAME FOR THE TRACKSIDE MURDERS ON THE F.T.R.A., NOT REALIZING THE BAD PRESS THIS WOULD GIVE TO THE ORIGINAL 13, AND TO ALL HOBO'S AND MILITARY VETERANS RIDING FREIGHT TRAINS.

THIS DISSERVICE HAS SINCE BECOME A HANDY EXPLANATION, AS OPPOSED TO ACTUALLY INVESTIGATING, AND THAT'S NOT WHAT THE CITY TAXES ARE PAID FOR, NOR STATE TAXES, NOR EVEN FEDERAL TAXES! IF THAT'S THE WAY OF POLICING THEN LET'S ALL GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS DONE IN THE LATE 1700'S TO 1800'S, WE'LL STRAP ON SIX SHOOTERS AND ENFORCE OUR OWN LAWS, VIGILANTEISM, MOB RULE, THE ONE PERFECT WAY TO SEE THE FALL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTION. KIND OF OVER-THE-TOP ISN'T IT, BUT IF WE AS CITIZENS ALLOW EVEN ONE OFFICER TO CREATE SITUATIONS, THEN DON'T INVESTIGATE, FIND SCAPEGOATS, AND TELL THEMSELVES "WE DID OUR JOB," WE'RE JUST A MOB TOO, AND THAT'S WHAT HOBO'S HAVE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST SINCE OUR NATION WAS CREATED FOLLOWING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU OF THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY PULLED YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE SAND, AND YOUR ASS, QUIT BELIEVING LIES AND INNUENDO ABOUT HOBOS, PEOPLE OF A LOWER FINANCIAL STATURE, AND THE UNDERPRIVILEGED, AND HELPED FIGHT THESE PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY ENFORCE THE LAW, BUT IN ACTUALITY HAVE NO IDEA ON HOW TO ENFORCE THE VOTED UPON LAWS, AND ARE TRULY LAWLESS!

ALL RIGHT NOW, LET ME PUT THE REVIVAL PREACHER AWAY AND GET BACK TO THE HOBO DIALOGUE, I FIRST STARTED GOING TO BRITT IOWA IN 1987, I HEARD ABOUT THE HOBO'S WHO PRACTICED THE OLD WAYS AND GATHERED TOGETHER AROUND A REAL JUNGLE FIRE PRACTICING THE INHERITANCE OF TRADITIONS THAT I GREW UP WITH, SO I WENT TO SEE IF ANY OF THE OLDTIMERS THAT I USED TO TRAVEL WITH WERE STILL ALIVE AND COMMUNING

THERE. THE ONLY 2 THAT I KNEW WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE WERE SIDEDOOR PULLMAN KID, AND FRISCO JACK, SPARKY SMITH WAS A LITTLE LATE IN ARRIVING, AFTER HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE BULL IN DES MOINES, STEAMTRAIN MAURY GRAHAM WAS THERE, AS WELL AS MT. DEW, THESE TWO I WAS INTRODUCED TO BY FRISCO JACK, AND RAPID BOB. WITH 5 PEOPLE WHO WOULD RIDE THROUGH LAMPASSAS ON THE MKT, AND SWITCH TO THE G.C.&S.F. TO COME JUNGLE BEHIND MY MOM'S AND MY GANDY DANCER CAMP CAR HOME I STARTED FEELING AT HOME AGAIN, REAL REPRESENTATIVES OF TOURIST UNION #63 WERE PRESENT, AND THE OLD TRADITIONS WERE BEING HONORED AND PRACTICED. BUT THE HAND WRITING WAS ON THE WALL. PEOPLE CAME IN FEELING THEY COULD IMPROVE ON THE TRADITIONS PRACTICED AND BRING HOBO'S INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, MODERNIZE, AND IMPROVE ON AN ALREADY PERFECTLY WORKING SITUATION, BUT WITH ALL THEIR GOOD INTEENTIONS, ALL THEY DID WAS TURN THE HOBO CONVENTION INTO A POLITICAL ASSEMBLY. DESTROYING WHAT THEY WISHED TO PROTECT, THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN, THESE FOLKS SHOULD READ JOHN STEINBECK'S NOVEL AND REALIZE THE HIDDEN MESSAGE BEHIND THE STORY!

HOBO'S ARE THE ULTIMATE REBELS, THEY REBEL AGAINST EVERYTHING FROM THE GREAT NORM AND STANDARD THAT STATES THEY ARE GOOD FOR NOTHING, FROM PREJUDICE, FROM PEOPLE LYING ABOUT THEM, AND THEIR HABITS, THEY PERSEVERE TO SHOW THAT THESE LIES ARE MISPLACED, AND THEY ARE MISJUDGED. IN REALITY THEY ARE JUST LIKE THE CONFEDERATE CAPTAIN NEWTON KNIGHT, HE TOO WAS LIED ABOUT, SHOWN PREJUDICE AGAINST BECAUSE HE HATED THE IMPROPER NATURE OF WHITE POWER THAT WAS ACTIVE IN THE CONFEDERACY DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. AFTER A BATTLE IN WHICH HIS SON WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED HE CARRIED THAT SON BACK TO THE REAR FOR MEDICAL AID ONLY TO BE SHOWN INDIFFERENCE AND WATCH HIS 15 YEAR OLD SON DIE. NEWTON DESERTED THE CONFEDERACY AND CARRIED HIS SONS BODY HOME TO BE BURIED, DURING HIS TIME AT HOME HE FOUND HE WAS CLASSIFIED AS A DESERTER AND USED THIS TO HIS ADVANTAGE FIGHTING AGAINST CONFEDERATE RAIDERS DECIMATING FARMS, AND ENSLAVING AMERICANS OF AFRICAN DESCENT (I USE THIS TERMINOLOGY TO DESCRIBE PEOPLE WHO WERE AMERICANS AND DESCENDED FROM AFRICANS, THE TERM AFRICAN AMERICANS MEANS THE MEN AND WOMEN CAME FROM AFRICA AND BECAME NATURALIZED AMERICANS WHICH IS NOT THE CASE NOW-A-DAYS). NEWTON NEVER PLAYED FAVORITISM WITH ANYBODY, HE TREATED EVERYONE HE MET IN THE SAME MANNER, AND WITH THE SAME HIGH REGARD,

EVERY MAN AND WOMAN WAS HIS BROTHER AND SISTER, AND UNTIL HIS DEATH HE NEVER CHANGED THIS IDEOLOGY! HE LED MANY RAIDS ON CONFEDERATE SUPPLY LINES, AND RECEIVED MEDICAL AID FROM A LADY WHO WAS AN AMERICAN OF AFRICAN DESCENT DOCTOR, NEWTON FELL IN LOVE WITH THIS LADY, HAD MANY CHILDREN WITH HER, THE FIRST INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE IN THE COUNTRY, AND THROUGH HER AND THE FORMER SLAVES CREATED THE FREE MEN OF JONES COUNTY. NEWTON AND THE FREE MEN FOUGHT THE CONFEDERACY THROUGH MANY WARS, AND SUCCEEDED WHERE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FELT THEY WOULD FAIL, UNTIL THEY SOUGHT A PEACE TREATY AND CREATED A DYNASTY THAT LIVES EVEN TODAY, FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE OPPRESSED IN MISSISSIPPI, AND JONES COUNTY.

THIS KIND OF REBELLION IS JUST THE SAME AS WHAT HOBO'S HAVE DEALT WITH EVERY DAY OF THEIR LIVES, FROM THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR UP TO THE PRESENT DAY, NO MAN SHOULD BE SUBJECTED TO THE STYLE OF PREJUDICE THAT NEWTON AND THE FREE MEN RECEIVED, AND BY THE SAME TOKEN NO HOBO SHOULD BE SUBJECTED TO THE SAME PREJUDICE IN THE PRESENT DAY AND AGE! BUT REBELS (HOBO'S HAVE BEEN REBELS SINCE THEIR FIRST INCEPTION) AND HAVE CONTINUED THROUGHOUT HISTORY, AND BEING A REBEL IS NOT A DISGUSTING TRAIT TO HAVE IN THIS DAY AND AGE, ONE YEAR I WAS TRAVELING TO KLAMATH FALLS OREGON, RIDING ON THE B.N. (BACK THEN WE REFERRED TO IT AS BIGGER NIGGER, ALTHOUGH SOME CALLED IT BUGGER NOSE) I RAN INTO A HOBO WHO CALLED HIMSELF SCREWY LOUIE, KIND OF PSYCHO BUT HARMLESSLY SO, AT THAT TIME I WAS CARRYING A KEROSENE LANTERN, I STILL PREFER THIS TO USING BATTERIES, MY TRAIN WAS IN WISHRAM WASHINGTON HEADED FOR BEND-OVER, (BEND OREGON) AND SCREWY LOUIE CAME WALKING THE YARD AND POKED HIS HEAD INTO THE BOXCAR I WAS ON. HOBO ETIQUETTE - HE ASKED IF HE COULD RIDE WITH ME, ODINARILY I DON'T RIDE WITH SOMEONE I DON'T KNOW BUT THIS MIGHT BE THE ONLY TRAIN FOR THE NEXT 2 TO 3 DAYS HEADING DOWN, SO I TOLD HIM "CLIMB ON" AND AS SOON AS HE DID B.N. PULLED THE TRAIN OUT. HE TOLD ME HIS NAME AND I TOLD HIM MINE AND HE WAS STRINGING SOME BEADS TOGETHER, LOUIE SAID HE HAD BEEN "UP" ON "SPEED" FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND WAS TRYING TO PURGE HIMSELF MAKING JEWELLERY, WE RODE TOGETHER THAT EVENING AND INTO THE NIGHT, LOUIE SAW THE LANTERN I WAS CARRYING AND ASKED IF HE COULD USE IT AS I SLEPT. WHEN THE MORNING CAME I AWOKE TO ROLLING INTO KLAMATH FALLS THE LANTERN WAS OUT, LOUIE SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO TURN IT OFF SO HE TURNED THE FLAME DOWN UNTIL IT EXTINGUISHED.

I SHOWED HIM HOW TO OPEN THE GLOBE AND GIVE IT A QUICK BLOW TO EXTINGUISH THE FLAME, THEN WE RODE INTO THE B.N. YARD, I WENT TO A LOCAL STORE TO BUY "TRAVELING SUPPLIES" AND WHEN I GOT BACK TO B.N. YARD SCREWY LOUIE HAD "MEL" IN THE "CATCH OUT" AND WAS TALKING WITH HIM, MEL SAID HE AND LOUIE WANTED TO RETURN NORTH AND VISIT HIS SISTER. MEL WANTED TO OPEN ONE OF THE BOXCARS WHICH WE DID OPENING BOTH DOORS INTO WHICH MEL, LOUIE, AND I GOT ON BOARD, THEN MEL STARTED ASKING ABOUT THE F.T.R.A, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHO AND WHAT THEY ARE, I TOLD HIM THEY'RE W.W. 2, KOREAN WAR, AND VIETNAM WAR VETERANS, AND ALL HOBO'S, THEY DISBANDED THE F.T.R.A. 21 DAYS AFTER IT WAS CREATED AND THE ONES CALLING THEMSELVES F.T.R.A. ARE A DIFFERENT GROUP. CALLING THEMSELVES FREIGHT TRAIN RIDERS OF AMERICA, BUT THEY ARE NO MORE LIKE THE ORIGINAL 13 THAN "ROGER THE DOGER" IS, (ROGER BRYANT WAS THE S.P. RAILROAD POLICE IN KLAMATH FALLS AND WAS FRIENDLY WITH HOBO'S, BUT STERN ABOUT THEM NOT RIDING HIS PIGGYBACKS) OTHERWISE WE HAD NO REAL PROBLEM IN "K-FALLS. (KLAMATH FALLS)" MEL ASKED ME IF I WAS F.T.R.A. TO WHICH I SAID NO, BUT I AM ASSOCIATED, MEL LOOKED TOWARDS LOUIE WHO STATED HE WAS F.T.R.A. BUT HE KNEW ABOUT ME AND THAT I WAS ASSOCIATED FOR THE PAST 20 OR MORE YEARS.

AND THE F.T.R.A. STILL UPHOLDS THE INHERITANCE THAT THE ORIGINAL HOBO'S CREATED OVER 200 YEARS AGO, LOUIE STATED "WE'RE STILL A FAMILY, A NATION WITHIN THE NATION OF THE UNITED STATES, NOT THE GANGSTERS THE THE T.V. NEWS, OR POLICE AUTHORITIES TRY TO INDOCTRINATE THE PUBLIC THAT WE ARE." MEL THEN ASKED ABOUT THE BLACK AND BLUE BANDANAS, BLACK IS FOR PEOPLE RIDING THE HIGHLINE, AND BLUE IS FOR PEOPLE RIDING THE LOWLINE, AND RED IS FOR PEOPLE RIDING THE SOUTHERN STATES. BUT THIS WAS THE IDENTIFYING SYMBOL OF THE FREIGHT TRAIN RIDERS OF AMERICA, NOT FUCK THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION! SATISFIED WITH OUR ANSWERS AND INFORMATION MEL THEN REVEALED HE WAS A KOREAN WAR VETERAN, AND I TOLD HIM I WAS IN THE 101ST AIRBORNE AND A PROFESSIONAL SNIPER, GOT MY BASIC TRAINING AT Ft. JACKSON, AND MY A.I.T. (ADVANCED INDIVIDUAL TRAINING) AT Ft. BRAGG, GRADUATED JUMP SCHOOL AND WENT ON TO SNIPER SCHOOL, BECAME SO PROFICIENT I WAS ATTACHED TO "THE NIGHT STALKERS" WHICH HAD ME ON "BLACK MISSIONS" AND WHEN I LEFT THE ARMY I SIGNED AN N.D.A.

CHAPTER 24

MEL DIDN'T NEED TO HEAR ANYMORE, HE HAD BEEN ON MISSIONS LIKE I HAD IN HIS DAY, PEOPLE OF A LIKE BACKGROUND CAN JUST LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND KNOW WHAT'S GOING THROUGH EACH OTHERS MIND, MEL HAD BEEN REASSIGNED FROM HIS ORIGINAL M.O.S. (METHOD OF OPERATING SERVICE) INTO ANOTHER R.A.T. (RECONNAISSANCE ASSAULT TEAM) HIMSELF AFTER ARMY OFFICERS RECOGNIZED HIS EXPERT ABILITY WITH WEAPONS, ESPECIALLY THE BARRET 50 CALIBER LONG RIFLE, AND THAT'S ALL I WILL SAY ABOUT THAT. SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT SECRETS, MANY HOBO'S WHO WERE FORMER MILITARY ARE STILL BOUND BY THEIR OATH OF INDUCTION: "TO PROTECT AND DEFEND THE UNITED STATES FROM ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC," THE SAME OATH THE PRESIDENT SWEARS, ONE I THING HAVE TO SHARE (ALTHOUGH I'LL ONLY TELL YOU A SHORT BIT ABOUT IT) IS THAT WE HAVE AN INFORMATION SOURCE AS-TO WHERE TO CATCH TRAINS, WHAT TIME THEY'LL ARRIVE AND DEPART, WHAT THE MAKEUP OF THE TRAIN WILL BE, ETC. USED TO BE WE HAD TO LOOK AT A WATER TOWER TO GAIN DIRECTIONAL INFORMATION, BUT AN ACTIVE HOBO DECIDED TO INCORPORATE ALL HIS, AND OTHERS TRAIN INFORMATION TOGETHER INTO A BOOK, COPYWRITEN, AND DUPLICATED BY XEROXING, AND PASSED BY HAND, NEVER SOLD OR UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET. MY FEAR IS THAT WITH INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM ON THE RISE, AND DOMESTIC TERRORISM FOLLOWING CLOSE BEHIND I AND OTHER MILITARY TRAINED HOBO'S WILL BE CALLED UP TO RETURN TO ACTIVE DUTY!, I CAN SEE MYSELF, AT AGE 65 OR 70 GOING "BACK IN THE BUSH" TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY, MY BODY MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT, BUT IN MY MIND I'M READY TO HONOR MY OATH AND DEFEND THIS COUNTRY, AS WELL AS DEFENDING MY HOBO FAMILY, IT'S JUST HOW I'M MADE!

KEEP THAT IN MIND THE NEXT TIME YOU SEE SOMEONE ON AN EXIT RAMP OF A HIGHWAY DRESSED IN MILITARY CLOTHES, AND HOLDING A HOMELESS VETERAN

SIGN, STOP AND FIND OUT IF HE OR SHE IS, IN REALITY, A MILITARY TRAINED HOBO, AND MIGHT BE THE PERSON WHO PROTECTS YOU, YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND TOWN FROM BEING BLOWN UP BY AL QAEDA, OR AL SHABAB, OR ANY ONE OF A NUMBER OF HOME GROWN TERRORISTS WE HAVE IN THE UNITED STATES! MEL, SCREWY LOUIE, AND I RODE ON THROUGH THE FOOTHILLS OF THE CASCADES INTO BEND-OVER WHERE WE RAN INTO FLY AND LITTLE DOVE WHO WERE HEADING THE SAME DIRECTION, BACK TO VANSCREWY, (VANCOUVER WASHINGTON) AND WE ALL RODE THE REST OF THE WAY THERE TOGETHER. BUT BEFORE WE CAUGHT OUT WE RAN ACROSS A BIG PILE OF COPPER WIRE, UNATTENDED, DOLLAR SIGNS WERE FLASHING IN OUR HEADS, "TRAMP GOLD" LOUIE YELLED, THE REST OF US TOLD HIM TO SHUT THE HELL UP OR OTHER HOBO'S WOULD BE COMING OUT OF THE WOODWORK. COPPER WAS BEING BOUGHT AT \$.80 A POUND AT THAT TIME AND THIS WAS TOO GOOD TO PASS UP, IT WAS LIKE FINDING THE DENVER MINT ON YOUR FRONT DOORSTEP, OR INGOTS FROM AN ARIZONA COPPER MINE IN YOUR BACKYARD. THE TRAIN GODS, OR THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD GIVING US A BLESSING. NOW YOU'VE HEARD ME USE THIS PHRASE MANY TIMES IN THIS BOOK SO I'LL TELL YOU WHY BEFORE YOU ASK, MANY HAVE BELIEFS THAT GUIDE THEM IN LIFE, SOME BELIEVE IN THE GOD OF THE BIBLE, OTHERS BELIEVE IN ALLAH, STILL OTHERS BELIEVE IN THE GREAT SPIRIT, AND OTHER PEOPLE BELIEVE IN HARE KRISHNA, THEN THERE ARE THE ONES THAT HAVE NO BELIEF. WHEN I SAY "THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD" IT'S TO SHOW RESPECT FOR PEOPLES BELIEFS, OR NON-BELIEFS, I NEVER TRY TO PUSH MY BELIEF, OR IDEOLOGY UPON SOMEONE ELSE, I PRESENT THE WAY I LIVE ALONG WITH MY BELIEF, AND LET THE ONES WATCHING ME MAKE THEIR OWN DECISION, AND I RESPECT THEIR DECISION WHATEVER IT MAY BE. JUST LIKE THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD (WHOO, THERE I GO AGAIN, IT'S KIND OF HABIT FORMING, FOR ME ANYWAY) INTENDED ALL PEOPLE TO HAVE, AND IF ENOUGH AMERICANS DO THIS IT'LL SPREAD ACROSS THE COUNTRY INTO OTHER COUNTRIES, AND NATIONS AND WE WON'T NEED WARS ANYMORE!

WE DE-TRAINED IN BEND-OVER TO GET THAT PILE OF "TRAMP GOLD" BUT WHILE WE WERE DOING THIS FLY NOTICED IT WAS THE WEEKEND AND WE'D HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL MONDAY MORNING TO SELL OFF OUR TRAMP GOLD. FLY HAD A FRIEND LIVING CLOSE BY, MARK AND DONNA, BUT FIRST WE POOLED OUR MONEY TOGETHER INTO A FRISCO AND BOUGHT SEVERAL BOTTLES OF ST. IDES (FRISCO CIRCLE, IT'S HOBO ETIQUETTE TO DO THIS) AND THEN WALKED TO THEIR HOUSE WHICH WAS A LONG DOUBLEWIDE TRAILER, MARK CAME TO THE DOOR TO GREET US. AND YELLED "HEY DONNA, WE'VE GOT HOBO FAMILY

AT THE DOOR," WE TOLD THEM WE RAN ACROSS THE "TRAMP GOLD" AND WERE LOOKING TO WAIT UNTIL THE EARLY MORNING BEFORE CATCHING BACK TO WISHRAM, MARK TOLD US TO MAKE OURSELVES AT HOME, WE VISITED WITH THEM FOR A WHILE BUT DONNA BEGGED OFF, SHE HAD TO GO WITH TO WORK IN THE MORNING. THE REST OF US SAT THERE VISITING AND DRINKING, I NOTICED THE ST. IDES WASN'T DOING ANYTHING FOR ME, MARK RELATED TO ME THAT I WAS PROBABLY SO TIRED THAT ALL THE ST. IDES WOULD DO IS MAKE ME PISS. I DRANK MYSELF DRUNK, THEN I DRANK MYSELF SOBER, THEN I DRANK MYSELF TIRED, FUNNY HOW A PERSON CAN DO THAT ISN'T IT? WELL AS WE ALL WERE SITTING IN MARK AND DONNA'S HOME ONE OF MARK'S FRIENDS CAME IN VISITING (OR SO WE THOUGHT), HE ASKED FOR A DRINK AND WE OFFERED HIM ONE OR TWO, THEN SAT IN A CHAIR MUTTERING AND CRYING, THE MUTTERING WAS SOUNDING LIKE "I WISH SOMEONE WOULD F%&@ WITH ME," IT WAS KIND OF CONFUSING. THEN ONE OF MARK'S DAUGHTERS CAME IN TRYING TO TALK WITH THE GUY, THAT'S WHEN BOTH ME AND MEL SAW THIS GUY SMACK HER IN THE FACE SNAPPING HER HEAD BACK, I GOT MY FILL OF THIS, AND WALKED OUT THE FRONT DOOR MOTIONING FOR MEL TO FOLLOW ME, AND HE FOLLOWED.

OUTSIDE I ASKED MEL IF HE SAW THIS GUY SMACK THE GIRL, HE SAID YES, SO I TOLD HIM I WAS GOING BACK INSIDE BUT IF THIS "FRIEND" STILL ACTED ASININE I WAS GOING TO LURE HIM OUTSIDE AND TUNE HIM UP WOULD HE BACK ME?, MEL AGREED TO DO SO. WE BOTH WENT BACK INSIDE AND SURE ENOUGH THIS GUY WAS ALMOST YELLING, AND BEING BELIGERENT, AND ABUSIVE, IT WAS THEN THAT ME, MEL, AND LOUIE ALL STOOD UP, LOUIE HAD AN AXEHANDLE IN HAND, BUT BOTH ME AND MEL HAD OUR K-BAR'S OUT, FINGERING THEM AND LOOKING MENACINGLY AT HIM. WE WERE GOING TO TELL MARK WHAT HE DID TO HIS DAUGHTER, BUT BEFORE WE COULD MARK YELLED AT THE GUY "IF YOU DON'T SETTLE DOWN I'M GOING TO TURN THESE HOBO'S LOOSE ON YOU." THIS GUY STILL HADN'T GOT THE MESSAGE AND DID THE STUPID THING SAYING "I'LL F1£€K YOU UP!", MEL YELLED BACK "YOU'VE GOT 3 F.T.R.A. HERE AND WE'RE RARING TO GO, IF YOU FEEL SO FROGGY, JUMP!" THE GUY FINALLY CHANGED HIS TUNE WEEPING, AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS, THEN HE AND MARK WENT OUTSIDE, WHEN MARK CAME BACK ABOUT 10 MINUTES LATER, HE STATED THE "FRIEND" JUST FOUND OUT HE HAS TERMINAL CANCER AS THAT'S WHAT ALL THAT DISPLAY WAS ABOUT. THEN MARK ASKED IF THE "FRIEND" REALLY SMACKED HIS DAUGHTER, AND WE ALL GAVE A RESOUNDING YES, MARK THEN STATED "WELL HE'S NO LONGER WELCOME HERE!" SO I TOLD MARK "IF YOU SEE HIM AGAIN LET HIM KNOW

HOW CLOSE HE CAME TO THE 3 OF US DRAGGING HIM DOWN THE ROAD, TUNING HIM UP, AND ENSURING HE WOULD NEVER BE SEEN AGAIN!," SOUNDS KIND OF VIOLENT DOESN'T IT? MARK, DONNA, AND THEIR DAUGHTERS ARE A PART OF OUR HOBO NATION, OUR FAMILY, AND WE HOBO'S WILL GO TO ANY EXTENT TO PROTECT OUR FAMILY, ANY EXTENT!

LATER THAT DAY THE 3 OF US WERE AT A CATCH-OUT NEXT TO THE B.N. YARD WAITING FOR THE "WISHRAM TRAIN" TO COME UP FROM THE LOWER YARD WHEN MARK, DONNA, AND THEIR DAUGHTERS WALKED IN AFTER FIRST SHOUTING A GREETING AND BRINGING BEER, ST. IDES, AND SAT DOWN TO VISIT AND WISH US WELL. MARK, DONNA, AND THEIR DAUGHTERS SAT DOWN ON THE DIRT AND ACTED LIKE IT WAS THEIR HOME, WHICH IT WAS! WE TALKED LIKE A FAMILY DOES WHEN THEY'RE TOGETHER, THEIR DAUGHTERS PLAYED AROUND, LIKE I SAID THEY WERE AT HOME, AND THIS JUNGLE WAS OUR HOME, AND THEIR HOME, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF WE'RE RETIRED AND LIVING IN A TOWN OR CITY, OR IF WE'RE ON THE ROAD, ANY PLACE WE LAY OUR HEADS IS OUR HOME, IT'S THAT SIMPLE!

THE BIGGER NIGGER TRAIN CAME IN WITH A BOXCAR RIGHT NEXT TO WHERE WE WERE SITTING IN THE JUNGLE, SO WE PICKED UP OUR OVERLOADED GEAR AND CLIMBED ON BOARD, IT TOOK 5 HOURS FOR THE TRAIN TO PULL OUT, BY THEN WE WERE ROLLING NORTH TOWARDS MADRAS, AND THE DUCHUTES RIVER CANYON. THE RAILROAD CROSSES AN EXTREMELY HIGH TRESTLE WHICH HAS A 2000 FT. DROP, BUT IT'S THE ENTRANCE TO A TRULY BEAUTIFUL CANYON RIDE, WITH THE VIEWS OF THIS RIDE IN THE GORGE, THE RIVER, THE GHOST TOWNS, THE KLAMATH TRIBE FISHING IN THE RIVER. EVEN THE LOCATION WHERE THE COLLEGE GIRLS ARE SUNBATHING, WHAT SCREWEY LOUIE CALLS "TITTIES AND BEER" IS ALWAYS A WELCOME SIGHT, AS IF THIS WAS A STAGE PLAY, OR A MOVIE TO ENJOY ALL THE WAY DOWN TO WISHRAM! AT THE COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING THERE IS A DELIVERY TRACK AND WE CAME TO A STOP FOR A TRAIN DELIVERING A STRING OF CARS FROM U.P, WHILE WE DID WE PILED UP ALL THE EXCESS LUMBER USED FOR SECURING LOADS NEXT TO ONE OF OUR DOORS TO THROW TO THE HOBO'S WHO JUNGLE OUT UNDER THE HIGHWAY BRIDGE, WHEN THE TRAIN STARTED ROLLING AGAIN WE THREW ALL THAT LUMBER OUT FOR THE 3 HOBO'S WHO CAMP THERE. THEN RODE ACROSS THE RIVER, GUSTY WINDS BARREL DOWN THE COLUMBIA, ONE YEAR MY COFFEE CUP WAS BLOWN OUT OF THE BOXCAR I WAS RIDING INTO THE RIVER, I HAD BEEN KNOWN FOR CARRYING A PLASTIC COFFEE CUP STAINED ALMOST

BLACK INSIDE, AND TOLD THE STORY ABOUT THAT SAYING "WITH ALL THE EXCESS CAFFEINE STAINED ON THE CUP THERE'LL BE 1000 NERVOUS FISH IN THAT RIVER!" THE TRAIN PULLED INTO WISHRAM YARD AND WE GOT OFF TO WAIT ON A WESTBOUND TO VANSCREWY, NORMALLY HOT, WISHRAM ALSO HAS NO GROCERY STORE, WE WERE POWERFULLY HUNGRY, SO LOUIE TALKED WITH JOHN (ONE OF THE LOCALS LIVING NEXT TO THE MAINLINE) AND SECURED A RIDE DOWN TO THE DALLES TO SELL SOME OF THE COPPER WIRE. AFTER AN HOUR AND A HALF LOUIE CAME BACK WITH SOME GROCERIES, STARTED A FIRE MIXED UP A SAUCE, SIMMERED IT, FOLDED IN SOME CRAB MEAT, AND WE ALL ATE CRAB LOUIE, DRANK OLD ENGLISH 800, WHILE WAITING TO GET ON A B.N. FOR VANSCREWY. AND THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY SAYS ALL WE EAT IS GARBAGE, REALLY?

THE RIDE TO VANSCREWY WAS SMOOTH AND COOL, THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE IS QUITE DEEP, WHEN THE GLACIERS CUT THE GORGE IT LEFT EXTREMELY HIGH CLIFFS, WITH GIANT SENTINEL FIR TREES GROWING, AND GUARDING THE GORGE ALL THE WAY TO ITS END AT VANSCREWY, SO MUCH SO THAT THEY HOLD LARGE CLOUDS IN PLACE TO GIVE THE AREA ITS OWN WEATHER PATTERN. ONE TIME I WAS RIDING WITH DIRTY DENNIS, WE GOT RAINED ON, AND DIRTY DENNIS YELLED "IT'S DRAINING," I ASKED "ARE YOU SURE THAT'S NOT A FLOCK OF CANADIAN GEESE FLYING OVER TAKING A SHIT?" ANOTHER TIME I RODE THROUGH RAIN AND HAIL, IT'S SIMILAR TO RIDING THROUGH THE EDGE OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE BRIEFLY, AND THEN COMING BACK OUT!, THIS TIME WE SAILED THROUGH EXTREMELY COLD WEATHER, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS THE HEAT OF SUMMER. SCREWEY LOUIE AND MEL TOOK THE COPPER TO A SCRAP METAL BUYER WHILE FLY, LITTLE DOVE, AND I WALKED PAST SCARE HOUSE (ACTUALLY IT'S SHARE HOUSE BUT JOHN "COAL TRAIN" EASLEY RENAMED IT) AND SAT DOWN TO DRINK COFFEE AND WAIT AT A DINER/WORK STATION IN TOWN CALLED THE CORNER (IT SITS ON A CORNER, NOT TOO MUCH IMAGINATION THERE!) WHICH IS WHERE HOBO'S GO TO FIND DAY LABOR! SCREWEY LOUIE AND MEL CAME BACK AND STATED THAT THE BUYER AT COPES METAL WANTED MORE OF WHAT WE BROUGHT HIM, THIS GAVE US THE IDEA TO RETURN SEVERAL TIMES, WHEN TRAVELING BACK AND FORTH ON A SECTION OF RAILROAD A HOBO NEVER NEEDS A SCHEDULE, THE TRAVEL IS INSTINCTUAL. A PATTERN DEVELOPS, EVERY MOTION AND MOVEMENT BECOMES INSTINCT, EVERY SOUND, EVERY CREAK, EVERY TURN, EVERYTHING, AND TRYING TO TELL HOW YOU KNOW IS IMPOSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S THE SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY, POLICE, YUPPIE HOBO'S, ETC. AFTER THE 11 TRIPS TO BEND-OVER AND BACK TO VANSCREWY I DECIDED TO VISIT

CATFISH, HE'S AN OLDER MEMBER OF THE PRESENT F.T.R.A, AND HE AND HIS GIRLFRIEND YO-YO WELCOMED ME WITH OPEN ARMS, I TOLD HIM I NEEDED TO RIDE ALONE FOR A WHILE, AND HE TOLD ME HE NEEDED TO DO THAT THE SAME THING FROM TIME TO TIME. SO HE SAID TO ME "KEEP ON RIDING TEXAS MADMAN, AND KEEP SHOWING PEOPLE WE ARE NOT THE MURDERERS, AND RAPISTS THAT GRANDENETTI TRIES TO INDOCTRINATE FOLKS TO BELIEVE WE ARE," AND WITH THAT I HEADED DOWN TO VANSCREWY AND CAUGHT THE TROLLEY TO "BURNSIDE AVENUE" IN PORTLAND AND WENT TO THE S.P. BROOKLYN YARD AND CAUGHT A SOUTHBOUND TO STOCTON CALIFORNIA, A W.P. TO OROVILLE, AND INTO SALTY DOG," A U.P. TO CHEYENNE WYOMING, A B.N. UP TO SHELBY MONTANA, THEN EAST THE MINNIEHOPELESS.

I JUST WANTED TO "CLEAR MY HEAD" AND RIDE, FREE AS A BIRD, WITH MY FACE IN THE WIND, EVERY HOBO NEEDS TO DO THIS FROM TIME TO TIME! THE TRAIN I TOOK HUALED ME FROM PORTLAND'S BROOKLYN YARD (S.P.) DOWN THROUGH SCREWGENE (EUGENE), INTO K-FALLS, AND FROM THERE I TOOK THE "BATTLE MOUNTAIN TRAIN" TO WINNEMUCCA NEVADA FROM THERE I BLASTED ACROSS THE NORTHERN NEVADA DESERT ON UNCLE PETE (U.P.) TO SALTY DOG. (SALT LAKE CITY) I TRANSFERRED TO THE DIRTY & RAGGED GOING WEST (D.&R.G.W.) AND RODE TO PISSHOLE (PUEBLO), FROM THERE I CAUGHT THE BIGGER NIGGER (B.N.) TO MILE HIGH (DENVER), AND FURTHER UP TO COWBOY CITY (CHEYENNE) WHERE A CONTINUOUS HOBO JUNGLE HAS BEEN EXISTING SINCE 1902! THE HOBO'S HAVE THE EMPLOYMENT AT THE STOCKYARD ALL TO THEMSELVES, AS WELL AS ROOFING, AND PLUMBING, THEY COLLECT WOOD FROM FREIGHT CARS THEY CLEAN FOR A COMPANY THAT CONTRACTS WITH UNCLE PETE. THEY CLEAN THE STREETS OF COWBOY CITY AFTER FRONTIER DAYS, AND THE STREETS ARE CLEANER THAN THE PUBLIC WORKS EVER GETS THEM. THEY'RE NEVER SEEN PANHANDLING LIKE THE BUMS IN DENVER, OR THE BUMS IN CONGRESS, AND ALWAYS GIVE A HELPING HAND TO ANYONE WHO NEEDS THE HELP, THE UNSUNG HEROES WHO NEVER GET A SALUTE BUT KEEP PERSEVERING, SO DON'T CALL THEM BUMS!

AFTER A HOLD OVER IN COWBOY CITY I RODE THE BIGGER NIGGER (B.N.) UP TO MONTANA BLONDE TERRITORY (SHELBY MONTANA) AND THE MONTANA PRAIRIE, LONG FLAT, AND WINDSWEPT, WITH WAVING SEAS OF WHEAT AND WILD GRASSES I HEARD THE CALL OF COYOTES ON THIS PRAIRIE AS THE TRAIN FLEW EAST TO MINNESOTA. AND I DOZED ROCKING TO THE RHYTHM OF THE TRAIN AS IT SAILED ALONG ACROSS THE WESTERN MINNESOTA PRAIRIE AND

IT'S BEAUTIFUL SUNRISES, PLUS IT'S MASSIVE MINNESOTA NATIONAL AIR FORCE (MOSQUITOES) I TRULY ENJOYED THIS ADVENTURE TO SEE THE GREAT WHITE NORTH! LAND OF VIKINGS, LAND OF CEREAL COMPANIES, LAND OF INNOVATION, AND RECENTLY LAND OF INDIAN MOTORCYCLES!, THE OLDEST OF AMERICAN MOTORCYCLES, INDIAN STARTED IN SPRINGFIELD MASSACHUSETTS AS A BICYCLE COMPANY, AND ONE INDUSTRIOUS EMPLOYEE DECIDED TO ADD A 12 HP MOTOR TO THE EXISTING BICYCLE SO HIS SON COULD RIDE IT TO DELIVER NEWSPAPERS ON HIS "PAPER ROUTE." SOON HEARING OF THE MOTORIZED BICYCLE HIS NEIGHBORS ASKED THE MAN TO DO THE SAME THING FOR THEM, WORD GOT TO THE MAIN OFFICE AND THIS EMPLOYEE WAS CALLED TO SHOW HIS MOTORIZED BICYCLE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BICYCLE COMPANY. AFTER CONSULTATION, ARGUMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, AND EXPERIMENTATION WITH THE PRODUCT THE EMPLOYEE BECAME VICE PRESIDENT OF INDIAN MOTORCYCLES IN 1901, GIVING HARLEY DAVIDSON MAJOR COMPETITION FOR THE NEW MOTORCYCLE MARKET. DURING W.W.2 INDIAN, ALONG WITH HARLEY DAVIDSON ENDURED METAL RESTRICTIONS DURING THE WAR METAL DRIVES THAT PERSISTED. DURING THAT TIME INDIAN MOTORCYCLES DESIGNED THE INDIAN WARRIOR, AND THE SCOUT, PLUS RECEIVED A CONTRACT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO MANUFACTURE 400 MOTORCYCLES FOR USE DURING THE WAR IN EUROPE. 200 WENT TO THE MARINES, 200 WENT TO THE ARMY, OF THIS ORDER OF 400 - 17 SURVIVED INTACT WITH ORIGINAL NUMBERS, OF THESE 17 - 13 RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES, 1 IS IN THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM, THE OTHER IS IN THE FRONT OFFICE AT THE PRESENT INDIAN MOTORCYCLES IN MINNEAPOLIS. THE WARRIOR WAS NEVER BUILT FOR THE CITIZEN MARKET, BUT THE SCOUT WAS AND THIS DESIGN WAS NOTED FOR SETTING LAND SPEED RECORDS AT BONEVILLE FLATS, HOWEVER WITH MORE MONEY IN ITS BANK ACCOUNT - HARLEY DAVIDSON EMERGED AS THE PRIMER MOTORCYCLE COMPANY IN THE UNITED STATES FORCING INDIAN TO MOVE ITS PRODUCTION FACILITIES TO CANADA. IN 2010 INDIAN MOTORCYCLES RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES AND WAS BUILT IN BOWLING GREEN OHIO USING S&S MOTORS, BUT THIS LASTED ONLY A SHORT 3 YEARS, WITH NO NEW INVESTMENT INDIAN SOLD OUT TO THE EMERGING POLARIS COMPANY, ALREADY BUILDING SNOWMOBILES, JET SKIS, AND THE VICTORY MOTORCYCLE, POLARIS PUT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO INDIAN MOTORCYCLES, ITS FAITH IN THE BRAND PAID OFF AS INDIAN HAS BECOME EVEN MORE SOUGHT AFTER. 15 DIFFERENT MODELS OF THIS FAMOUS BRAND HAVE EMERGED FROM MINNEAPOLIS GIVING A STEADY 40-45 MPG. DIDN'T KNOW I'D DO AN UNOFFICIAL INDIAN MOTORCYCLE COMMERCIAL IN THIS BOOK BUT - HERE IT IS!

CHAPTER 25

SO MY DESIRE WAS TO CONTINUE WITH MY TRAVELS, HOWEVER MY HEALTH STARTED TAKING A DIFFERENT TURN, MUCH OF MY PAST MILITARY LIFE (WHICH TOOK ME TO PLACES AND SITUATIONS THAT I STILL CAN'T TALK ABOUT) WAS SPENT AS A PROFESSIONAL SNIPER IN JUNGLES, AND WOODLANDS THAT WERE FOREIGN TO ME, AND EXPOSED ME TO CLIMATES AND CHEMICALS THAT ADVERSELY AFFECTED MY SIGHT, EQUILIBRIUM, AND BALANCE. I STARTED LOOKING FOR A CITY OR TOWN TO PUT DOWN ROOTS, FOR AWHILE I WAS CONSIDERING KILEEN, OR TEMPLE, OR EVEN SAN ANTONIO, I SPENT SEVERAL YEARS LIVING IN SAN ANTONIO AND RIDING OUT ON S.P. FROM THE KIRBY YARD WHEN THE ITCHY FEET STARTED GETTING TOO MUCH TO TAKE. AND I WORKED AT SAN ANTONIO CONCRETE MIXING ADOBE, BUT EVERY DAY I'D HEAR THE M.K.T. FREIGHTS ROLLING BY THE PLANT AND LONG FOR MY FACE IN THE WIND, SO WHEN A HOBO FRIEND CALLED ME ONE DAY TO GIVE HELP IN CLEVELAND OHIO I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE TO RIDE AGAIN. BY NOW THE M.K.T. WAS JUST A MEMORY HAVING BEEN BOUGHT BY THE U.P, SO I RODE THE OLD ROUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY UP THROUGH AUSTIN AND TAYLOR, THANK THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD THAT IT WAS AFTER DARK. SUMMER IN SOUTH TEXAS IS HOT, AND CAN BE MISERABLE, BESIDES I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE THE CAPITOL, I BUT WANTED TO ENJOY THE COOL OF NIGHT AND THE SPEED OF THE RIDE AS WE RODE NEXT TO THE FREEWAY PAST DOWNTOWN WITH ITS RAT RACE. AND FINALLY ROCKING ALONG, THE TRAIN DOING 50 MPH, I ENJOYED THE CHILL OF EVENING, AND THE SINGING OF THE WHEELS TELLING ME I'M ON MY WAY. AT TAYLOR IT WAS TIME TO WAIT ON THE NORTHBOUND TO WACO/BELLMEADE THUS I HAD A LONG WAIT AT THE "KATY" DEPOT, NOW ABANDONED AND FORLORN LOOKING, I REMEMBERED TIMES I WOULD CATCH A TRAIN WHEN IT WOULD STOP TO GRAB "TRACK WARRANTS" BEFORE HEADING FURTHER NORTH, TAKING SHELTER IN THE "GANDY SHED" OR GATHERING FIREWOOD FOR THE DISPATCHER'S "POTBELLY STOVE" TO HEAT THE DEPOT IN THE CHILLIER MONTHS! MANY WAS THE TIME THAT I, AND OTHER "HOBO EXTRA'S" WOULD RUN MEALS AND BATTERIES TO THE LOCOMOTIVES, OR THE CONDUCTOR AND REAR BRAKEMAN TO "PAY THE FARE" TO GO FURTHER NORTH, AND NOW REMENIECING THIS BROUGHT A TEAR FOR MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE "CAUGHT THE WESTBOUND" AND DID THIS VERY SAME THING! WE PAY OUR WAY, IT'S AN WAY OF LIFE TO THE HOBO NATION, IT'S IN OUR D.N.A. AND WE DON'T APOLOGIZE FOR IT, ONE YEAR I WAS TRAVELING TO PENNSBURG PENNSYLVANIA AND HAD STOPPED IN ELKHART INDIANA TO WORK UP TRAVELING \$\$\$, WHEN

CATCHING OUT I FOUND MYSELF AT A DINER NEXT TO THE TRAIN YARD OF THE CONRAIL, I CALLED UP GYPSY MOON WHO LIVED IN NASHVILLE INDIANA. I HAD \$10.00 IN QUARTERS AND TO EXTEND THE CALL, I KEPT INSERTING MORE QUARTERS, SUDDENLY SHE EXCLAIMED LOUDLY "CALL ME BACK COLLECT" BUT I KEPT ON INSERTING QUARTERS UNTIL IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO LEAVE.

I CROSSED AN EXTREMELY BUSY U.S. HIGHWAY AND INSERTED MYSELF ON THE TRAIN HIDING IN A GONDOLA, PRETTY SOON THE TRAIN PULLED SO I WATCHED THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE TRAIN, AS SOON AS THE NEW YORK CENTRAL MUSEUM WAS A FADING VIEW I KNEW I WAS ON MY WAY AND WE PASSED SWIFTLY THROUGH THE NORTHERN INDIANA FARM COUNTRY. AND HERE I BECAME ENVELOPED IN COOLING WINDS AS IF I WAS A DOG WHO HAD ITS HEAD OUT THE WINDOW OF A CAR OR A TRUCK (AND YES, I LOOKED LIKE ONE TOO), I HAD LONGER HAIR AT THAT TIME, ALMOST AS LONG AS THAT OF CRYSTAL GALE, OR LONG HAIR DONNIE. (ANOTHER HOBO I KNEW) THE TRAIN FLEW DOWN THE TRACKS WITH WHEELS SINGING AND WHINING, I BEGAN TO BECOME ONE WITH THE TRAIN, A TRANSFORMATION THAT HAPPENS EVERY TIME I RIDE NOW, HOBO KING AD MAN USED TO CALL IT THE DRIFT, BECOMING INVISIBLE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY DRIVERS WAITING FOR THIS TRAIN TO PASS BY. THE TRAIN PASSED BY SANDUSKY CROSSING THE INLET TO SANDUSKY BAY, THROUGH DOWNTOWN AND BY THE ENTRANCE TO CEDAR POINT, PEOPLE SAILED AND ENJOYED RIDING MOTORBOATS ON LAKE ERIE AND SOON I WAS PASSING BY THE FORD PLANT IN LORAIN. AT THIS POINT I CONSIDERED CHANGING TO AN INTERMODAL TO SAIL IN COMFORT INTO BUFFALO NEW YORK, HIDING ONCE AGAIN I FELT THE TRAIN SLOWING DOWN, I PONDERED WHAT WAS GOING ON, ESPECIALLY WHEN CONRAIL SWITCHED FROM THE LAKE SHORE LINE TO THE VALLEY LINE, THIS WAS ORIGINALLY THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD'S ROUTE INTO CLEVELAND.

WHEN THE TOWER AT BEREA PASSED ME I REALIZED I WAS GOING INTO THE COLLINWOOD YARD, NOW I RELAXED, KNOWING I WOULD HAVE TIME TO CHANGE TO ANOTHER TRAIN, NOW IT WAS TIME TO PEEK OUT LIKE A UNDERCOVER SIGHT-SEER AS WE PASSED ANOTHER FORD PLANT, CLEVELAND HOPKINS AIRPORT, AND MADE THE TURN TO ROLL AROUND DOWNTOWN PARALLELING THE 480 LOOP AND THE EXPRESSWAY HEADING FOR THE VALLEY CROSSING. ANOTHER PICTURESQUE VIEW OFTEN PHOTOGRAPHED AND USED IN TOURIST ADVERTISEMENTS, AND AN EXTREMELY LONG DROP TO THE CITY/STATE PARK ON THE VALLEY FLOOR, THIS DROP IS 1000 FEET DOWN, SIMILAR TO

THE DROP ON THE B.N. AT DESCHUTES RIVER CANYON, OR THAT OF THE U.S. HIGHWAY CROSSING THE NEW RIVER GORGE IN WEST VIRGINIA AND ANOTHER GORGE I WOULD BE CROSSING WHILE RIDING THE DELAWARE & HUDSON RAILROAD - THE GENNESSEE RIVER GORGE! CALLING COLLINWOOD KID I ASKED FOR INFORMATION ON CATCHING AN INTERMODAL TO BUFFALO, HE SAID TO WAIT THERE AND HE'D BE DOWN AT THE YARD SOON, I STATED "GAAAWWWW, JUST TELL ME!, BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T I'LL JUMP THE FIRST THING EAST AND BE GONE BEFORE YOU GET HERE!" WHEN HE HEMMED AND HAWKED AROUND I HUNG UP AND WENT TO THE CATCH OUT, SURE ENOUGH AN EASTBOUND PULLED UP, I JUMPED INTO THE WELL OF AN INTERMODAL AND WAITED, HEARD THE HISS OF RELEASING BRAKES, AND FELT THE TUG AS THE TRAIN PULLED OUT HEADING EAST. IT WAS THEN THAT I HEARD THE CALL "HEY TEXAS MADMAN," I POPPED MY HEAD UP AND SAW COLLINWOOD KID, SHOOK MY HEAD, AND SAT BACK DOWN, THE TRAIN WAS HEADING EAST, I WAS COMMITTED, NO TIME TO STOP AND SHOOT THE SHIT. SO I STAYED HID AS WE ROLLED PAST THE EAST END FUEL DEPOT AND ENTERED THE MAIN LINE, I STAYED HID UNTIL WE PASSED THE DEFECT DETECTOR AND THEN STOOD UP, THE SUN WAS SETTING ON THIS PART OF MY ADVENTURE, WARM BREEZES BUFFETED MY FACE INFUSED WITH MOISTURE FROM LAKE ERIE. AND WE PICKED UP SPEED WITH THE FREEWAY ON ONE SIDE AND LINCOLN ELECTRIC ON THE OTHER THE TRAIN SOON CROSSED A BRIDGE AS WE ROLLED PAST THE ABANDONED SHOPPING MALL WHICH IS NOW AN AMAZON FULFILLMENT CENTER, UNDER THE I-90 OVERPASS, THROUGH WICKLIFFE, MENTOR AND ASHTABULA.

SOON LATE EVENING CAME WITH SCENTS OF PENNSYLVANIA FARMLANDS, AND WESTERN NEW YORK WINERIES, APPROACHING BUFFALO MY TRAIN PULLED OVER SEVERAL TIMES TO ALLOW HIGHER PRIORITY TRAINS TO GO BY EITHER WAY, AS WELL AS THE PASSING OF AMTRAK (SOME PEOPLE REFER TO IT AS AMTRASH)! THEN THE TRAIN PULLED TO A STOP AT THE WEST SIDE CHEVROLET PLANT AND STAYED PARKED FOR 4 HOURS, FINALLY GETTING TIRED OF WAITING I DE-TRAINED AND WALKED TO THE NEW YORK, SUSQUEHANNA & WESTERN RAILROAD TO CATCH-OUT FOR BINGHAMTON. HIGH SPEED MODE, I WAS MORE EXCITED THAN TIRED, WITH FLINT, STEEL, AND TRAIN DIRT ON MY CLOTHES, PLUS THE SMELL OF CREOSOTE FILLING MY LUNGS I LOOKED FORWARD TO MY RECONNAISSANCE, ASSAULT, AND UNDERCOVER TRANSPORTATION MISSION THAT I WAS ON. DOING THIS WITH LITTLE MONEY, PAST EXPERIENCE, MY WILL, AND THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD, IT'S WHAT KEEPS ME ALIVE AND LOOKING FORWARD TO TOMORROW,

AND THE NEXT DAY, OR THE NEXT, ALL THE WAY INTO THE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH I REALIZED I'M NOT PROMISED A FUTURE, JUST A PRESENT, AND WHAT I DEALT WITH IN THAT PRESENT WAS WHAT I'VE ALWAYS DONE. STEALTHILY ENTER THE LOCATION OF THE D&H YARD TO LOOK FOR A RIDE, WHAT I FOUND WAS THE BINGHAMTON TRAIN ALREADY MADE UP WITH THE MOST RAGGED TRASH OF FREIGHT HAULING EQUIPMENT THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN, RUSTED HEAVILY GOUGED CARS, SPILLING LOADS, METAL SECURING STRAPS HANGING OUT BOXCAR DOORWAYS, I WONDERED IF I SHOULD GET ON BOARD, IF EVER THERE WAS A RIDE FROM HELL IT WOULD BE THIS ONE. LATER I HEARD THAT D&H WAS SOLD TO A CANADIAN FREIGHT HAULING GROUP, AND RETITLED ST. LAWRENCE & HUDSON, I STILL WONDER IF IT WAS WORTH THE \$200,000,000.00 PURCHASES PRICE?, BE-THAT-AS-IT-MAY: MY OBJECTIVE WAS TO HEAD OUT FOR B-TOWN (BINGHAMTON) AND RIDE DOWN TO ALLENTOWN PENNSYLVANIA.

WELL I FOUND A BOXCAR THAT WAS A REASONABLE RIDE AND CLIMBED INSIDE WAITING UNTIL THE DISPATCHER ALLOWED THE TRAIN CREW TO HEAD EAST, FINALLY I COULD BREATHE, FINALLY I COULD LEAVE THE METROPOLITAN BUFFALO BEHIND, FINALLY I COULD ROLL TOWARDS THE OPEN COUNTRY AND CROSS THE APPALACHIANS AND BE BACK IN GOD'S COUNTRY! SO OFF WE WENT, HEADING FOR THE GENNESSEE RIVER GORGE, I HEARD IT LONG BEFORE I SAW IT AND NOW I REALIZE WHY IT'S SUCH A WELL KEPT SECRET. WE BURST THROUGH A DEEP WALL OF DARK PINE FOREST TO CROSS A 1300 DEEP GORGE WITH A NARROW BUT EXCITING FLOW OF FALLS, WERE IT NOT FOR THE SURROUNDING FOREST YOU MIGHT ENVISION THIS TO BE ONE OF A GROUP OF WATERFALLS IN HAWAII. THE WEALTHY OF AMERICA VACATIONS HERE, THE BUSH'S, TRUMP'S, ITALIAN AND SICILIAN FAMILIES LIKE CALABRESE, OR GENOVESE, CAPONE, THE HILTON CLAN HAVE PERMANENT HOMES HERE, PARIS HILTON'S DOG HOUSE IS INSURED FOR \$3,000,000.00, YOU COULDN'T TOUCH A GUEST HOUSE FOR UNDER \$15,000000.00 HERE. THEN IMMEDIATELY WE CROSSED BACK INTO THE DEEP FOREST TO HEAD FOR CORNING, AND THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER RIDING NEXT TO THE ABANDONED ERIE LACKAWANNA & WESTERN RAILROAD WHICH PARALLELS US DOWN TO A FOOTBALL STADIUM IN BINGHAMTON. BUT THE RIDE ISN'T OVER YET, THE TRAIN CROSSED THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER INTO THE CITY OF CONKLIN AND THE D&H YARD, ALL NIGHT LONG I HEARD THE CITY NEXT DOOR, ALL THE SCREAMING OF DRUNKEN STUDENTS, THE HONKING OF CARS ON THE HIGHWAY, AND IN ANTICIPATION I STAYED AWAKE UNTIL ANOTHER TRAIN WAS MADE UP TO GO FURTHER SOUTH. I CLIMBED IN A

GONDOLA AND RODE THIS DOWN THROUGH HILLS AND VALLEYS TO A SMALL YARD ON THE NORTH SIDE OF ALLENTOWN AND WALKED TO THE INTERMOUNTAIN BUS STATION (THE RIDE WAS ALMOST OVER) WHERE I PAID FOR A BUS TO QUAKERTOWN, AND AFTER BEING DEPOSITED IN QUAKERTOWN I WENT TO THE BACK OF A McDONALD'S, GRABBED A PIECE OF CARDBOARD, MADE A PENNSBURG PLEASE SIGN, AND HITCHHIKED INTO PENNSBURG! (WHEW!)

RED BIRD EXPRESS HAD A STRING OF BOXCARS ON A TRACK NEXT TO THE SITE OF HIS EAST COAST HOBO GATHERING, HELD ON THE GROUNDS OF THE PERRKIOMEN PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND THEIR ARBORETUM, AND I FOUND A PLACE IN A BOXCAR TO ROLL OUT. THE NEXT MORNING I WAS GREETED BY EVERYONE THERE, RED BIRD EXPRESS, SNAPSHOT, DANTE FUCWHA, PREACHER STEVE, HOBO SLC, STRETCH, BANJO FRED, BOB ESPOSITO, COLLINWOOD KID SHOWED UP A LITTLE LATER IN THE DAY. BUT GYPSY MOON WAS THERE ALREADY, SHE CORNERED ME SAYING "YOU SHOULD HAVE CALLED ME COLLECT," TO WHICH I SAID "I WANTED TO PAY FOR THE CALL, IT'S MY RIGHT!," SHE TRIED TO BE FORCEFUL SAYING "IT'S MY MONEY," TO WHICH I STATED "I PAY MY WAY AND THAT'S MY RIGHT! NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU'VE LEARNED FROM YOUR FATHER, OR FROM YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH STEAMTRAIN MAURY GRAHAM, OR LIBERTY JUSTICE. NO MATTER WHO YOU MEET, I FEEL INSULTED BECAUSE OF YOUR IMPRESSIONS ABOUT WHAT YOU FEEL IS THE TRUTH, AND HOW IT PERTAINS TO ME AND MY HOBO FAMILY." THE REST OF THE TIME I WAS IN ATTENDANCE I KEPT MY DISTANCE, THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I EVER FELT UNCOMFORTABLE AT A HOBO GATHERING, NOT BECAUSE OF VIOLENCE, BUT BECAUSE OF SOMEONE I THOUGHT WAS FAMILY TURNED OUT TO BE ONE OF MANY WHO SPREAD LIES, AND INNUENDO. AT THE END OF THE EVENT I APPROACHED GYPSY MOON AND TOLD HER "I'M GOING TO ALLENTOWN TO CATCH CONRAIL THROUGH CLEVELAND, AND INTO CHICAGO, THEN TAKE THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL TO THE GULF COAST, DON'T FOLLOW ME, DON'T TRY TO RIDE WITH ME, YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ME BUT YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ME. AND I THOUGHT I KNEW YOU BUT NOW I REALLY DO KNOW YOU, DON'T WRITE ME, DON'T TRY TO CONTACT ME IN ANY WAY, I'M NOT YOUR HOBO FAMILY, AND YOU'RE NOT MINE, I KNOW WHO THEY REALLY ARE, AND THEY'RE NOT YOU! THEN I CAUGHT A RIDE TO ALLENTOWN FROM QUIET MIKE, THE HOBO LIBRARIAN AND CAUGHT A RIDE ON CONRAIL THROUGH HORSESHOE CURVE INTO ALTOONA, POTTSTOWN, PITTSBURGH, CONWAY YARD, CLEVELAND, TOLEDO, ELKHART, AND INTO BARR YARD. TOOK A METRA TO MARKHAM YARD AND CAUGHT ILLINOIS CENTRAL TO CHAMPAIGN,

CENTRALIA, CARBONDALE, FULTON, MEMPHIS, YAZOO CITY, JACKSON, McCOMB, AND INTO BATON ROUGE. FINALLY I WAS HOME, BACK AMONG REAL PEOPLE, REAL HOBO'S, THIS IS NOT TO SAY I DON'T TRAVEL BACK NORTH ANYMORE, I'M JUST PARTICULAR ABOUT WHO I TRAVEL, AND ASSOCIATE WITH!

SO ON THAT NOTE LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE TIME COLLINWOOD KID AND I RODE THE HIGH LINE TOGETHER, I HAD RIDDEN UP TO MINNIEHOPELESS WITH ROD SYKORA INTENDING TO HEAD NORTH ON THE C.P. AND GO IN THE "BACK DOOR" TO "WHY NOT MINOT" (MINOT NORTH DAKOTA, THE OLD JOKE GOES: WHY NOT MINOT?, REASON, IT'S FREEZIN! I'VE SEEN SNOW FALLING IN MINOT ON JULY 4TH!), I WAS SLEEPING IN ROD'S BASEMENT WHEN HE GOT A CALL FROM COLLINWOOD KID ABOUT THEM RIDING THE HIGHLINE TOGETHER. ROD HAD BACKED OUT WHICH UPSET COLLINWOOD SO I VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE ROD'S PLACE. THEN HE PUT ME ON THE PHONE WITH THE COLLINWOOD KID, I'VE NEVER CONSIDERED RIDING WITH A YUPPIE HOBO, IT WAS NEVER SOMETHING I'D DONE BEFORE, AND TALK ABOUT QUIRKY, WELL, I'M QUIRKY TO MANY PEOPLE BUT SO IS EVERYONE, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A CLONE, A CARBON COPY OF ANOTHER PERSON. TOO MANY PEOPLE FEEL THAT WE'RE ALL THE SAME AS EACH OTHER, EVERY HOBO IS EXACTLY THE SAME, WHAT A CROCK, SO THE COLLINWOOD KID THOUGHT I'D CIRCLE BACK TO CHICAGO AND WAIT FOR HIM THERE, I TOLD HIM I DON'T BACKTRACK, I WON'T GO BACK TO CHICAGO BECAUSE I NEVER RIDE OUT OF CICERO, BUT I WILL COME BACK AS FAR AS LACROSSE WISCONSIN. IF HE WOULD MEET ME THERE I'LL COME THAT FAR AND WAIT WHILE ENDURING THE WISCONSIN NATIONAL AIR FORCE, AFTER MUCH DISCUSSION COLLINWOOD FINALLY AGREED, AFTER HANGING UP THE PHONE I WONDERED WHAT I HAD GOTTEN MYSELF INTO? I DIDN'T KNOW THIS PERSON, I'D ONLY MET HIM ONCE OR TWICE AT BRITT, I WAS WONDERING WHAT HIS EXPERIENCE WAS WITH HOBO'S AND FREIGHT TRAINS. I USUALLY ONLY TRAVEL WITH OTHER WELL KNOWN HOBO'S NOT YUPPIES, BUT HE PROBABLY HAD THE SAME IMPRESSION ABOUT ME, SO AFTER I HUNG UP ROD CALLED MPLS. JEWEL AND DISCUSSED WITH HER THAT I WAS TAKING HIS PLACE ON THIS VENTURE AND WASN'T I A DEAR? I BRISTLED INSIDE AT THIS COMMENT, NOBODY MANIPULATES ME, I'M NOT SOMEONE'S PUPPET, I HAVE MY OWN WAY TO LIVE AND TRAVEL WHILE ON THE ROAD SO COLLINWOOD WAS IN FOR AN ADVENTURE AND SO WAS I. ROD SUGGESTED I GO TO DAYTONS BLUFF YARD TO CATCH THE B.N, BUT I NEVER SAW AN EASTBOUND STOP THERE, I WOULD GO TO NORTHTOWN TO CATCH IT, I'VE ALWAYS CAUGHT TRAINS OUT OF NORTHTOWN, I USUALLY RUN INTO OTHER HOBO'S THAT WAIT UNDER THE C.P./SOO OVERPASS AND THE USUAL TRAINS I'D CAUGHT AT THIS

SOUTHBOUND LOCATION WAS THE LACROSSE TRAIN, OR THE WILMAR TRAIN. FOR ME THERE'S 2 BACKDOORS TO THE HIGHLINE, AT NORTHTOWN THERE'S A C.P./SOO THAT ROLLS THROUGH AND CIRCLES BACK OVER THE B.N, CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER ENDING AT BROOKLYN YARD. I'D CATCH FROM THERE THROUGH ANNANDALE INTO THE SOUTH SIDE OF FARGO, JUMP OFF, WALK 1/4 OF A MILE TO THE HIGHLINE AND CATCH B.N. WHEN IT STOPS TO CHANGE CREWS AT THE AMTRASH OFFICE, OR I'D CATCH THE WILMAR TRAIN THROUGH WILMAR TO THE EAST SIDE OF FARGO AND RIDE IT DIRECTLY TO THE HIGHLINE, OTHERWISE I DON'T CHANGE MY TRAVELING HABITS!!!!

MUCH TO COLLINWOOD'S CHAGRIN HE'D HAVE TO NEGOTIATE WITH ME AND THIS MIGHT BE INTERESTING BECAUSE I AM NOT EASILY MANIPULATED REGARDLESS OF HOW INNOCENT I SOUND, PRESENTLY I OWN A DIGITAL VOICE RECORDER TO USE IN CONVERSATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS. IT HOLDS 64 GIGABYTES OF VOICE RECORDINGS, I USE IT FOR ANY NEGOTIATIONS, AND IF THE PERSON WHO I AM NEGOTIATING WITH STATES THEY NEVER SAID SOMETHING I'LL PLAY THE RECORDING BACK STATING "I'LL PLAY THIS FOR MY LAWYER TO SEE IF I NEED TO FILE A SUIT, SO UNDERSTAND YOU'RE NOT DEALING WITH A CHERRY, AND YOU'RE NOT USING ME FOR A SCAPEGOAT!" THEREFORE WHEN COLLINWOOD STATED HE WANTED ME TO RETURN TO CHICAGO TO RETRACE MY MILEAGE THROUGH CHICAGO INTO MINNESOTA I TOLD HIM "I WON'T BACKTRACK, BUT IF YOU RIDE INTO LACROSSE I'LL MEET YOU AT THE AMTRAK STATION AND WE'LL GO TO GRAND CROSSING AND CATCH THE B.N. FROM THERE!" HE AGREED AFTER MUCH RELUCTANCE, THEN I WALKED FROM ROD'S HOUSE THROUGH MINNIEHOPELESS TO NORTHTOWN AND CAUGHT A SOUTHBOUND TO LACROSSE SO AS TO ENDURE A 2-3 DAY WAIT, AND THIS MEANT USING ONE OF THE VACANT SOO LINE CABOOSSES FOR HOUSING WHILE WAITING FOR THIS "BUCKEYE" TO SHOW UP, WHILE SUPPORTING MYSELF, WASHING MY CLOTHES AND BODY IN THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, AND ENDURING THE WISCONSIN NATIONAL AIR FORCE! ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE 3RD DAY I COMPLETED MY DAILY ROUTINE OF WALKING TO AMTRASH WHICH IS HOUSED IN AN OLD BRICK MILWAUKEE ROAD YARD OBSERVATION TOWER, I WAS 30 FEET NORTH WHEN I SAW COLLINWOOD KID WANDER OUT LOOKING FOR ME. WITH NO PLEASANTRIES I WALKED OVER TO HIM AND GAVE A SHORT INTRODUCTION OF MYSELF STATING I WANTED TO GET MY GEAR WHICH WAS STASHED AND GO TO GRAND CROSSING SO AS TO WAIT FOR A NORTHBOUND B.N. AND INTRODUCE HIM TO THE ENTRANCE TO THE HIGHLINE.

AS WE WALKED I POINTED OUT THE SOO LINE YARD THAT WOULD TRANSFER FREIGHT FROM THIS LOCATION TO THE BURLINGTON YARD, THAT THERE WERE ABANDONED CABOOSSES TO STAY IN WHILE WAITING ON A TRAIN, ALSO THE SOO LINE WOULD STOP PERIODICALLY EAST AND WEST IF YOU'RE HEADING TO EITHER PORTAGE OR ST. PAUL. THE WALK TO GRAND CROSSING TOOK US BY A MAIN AVENUE OF BARS WHERE I WOULD SELL BLACKBERRIES WHEN THEY WERE IN SEASON, AND AFTER WE MADE IT TO GRAND CROSSING I SHOWED HIM THE RAILROAD DINER THAT WAS OPEN 24 HOURS FOR RAILROADERS, AS WELL AS LOCALS. THERE WAS AN DISPATCH BOARD SHOWING WHEN TRAINS WERE LEAVING AND WHAT DIRECTION THEY WERE HEADED. FINALLY IT WAS TIME TO GO TO THE CATCH-OUT UNDER THE BRIDGE WHERE EVERYONE WHO HAS PASSED THROUGH THE AREA LEFT THEIR MONIKER, OVER 130 MONIKERS WERE SIGNED HERE, WITH MESSAGES FOR INDIVIDUALS THAT THEY KNEW, OTHER MESSAGES WERE WARNINGS FOR SOME INDIVIDUALS TO STAY OFF THE ROAD BECAUSE OF SOME INFRACTION INCURRED, OTHERS GAVE DIRECTIONS, AND OTHER MESSAGES GAVE INFORMATION ABOUT WISCONSIN STATE POLICE OR RAILROAD DISPATCHERS, WARNINGS CONCERNING BAD TRACKAGE, OR WHICH TRAINS TO AVOID. A MENU BOARD MUCH LIKE A WATERTANK FROM THE OLD DAYS, THERE WAS A FIREPLACE, AND PANS TO COOK IN, EXTRA WATER, AND A PILE OF WOOD, WE WAITED UNTIL WE HEARD A HORN IN THE DISTANCE AND LISTENED FOR THE DIRECTION OF THE APPROACH. IT CAME FROM THE SOUTH ALTHOUGH THE TRAIN WAS ACTUALLY COME FROM THE EAST AS ITS HEADLIGHT APPEARED DOWN THE TRACKS BARELY MOVING ALTHOUGH I KNEW IT WAS COMING IN FAST, AND SOON WAS ROLLING BY, THEN IT CAME TO A STOP. THIS WAS THE CREW CHANGE AND THE SWITCH OUT TOOK SOME TIME, THIS GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO SEARCH THE TRAIN FOR THE BEST RIDE AVAILABLE, ALL THESE CARS WERE 48'S SO COLLINWOOD AND I BOARDED ONE THAT WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A 5 PACK WHICH WE WOULD RIDE FROM LACROSSE WISCONSIN TO HAVRE MONTANA. AFTER BOARDING WE SETTLED IN AND ROLLED OUT OUR SLEEPING BAGS, I ROLLED A CIGARETTE AND LIT UP, LES ASKED IF THE CREW COULD SEE THE SMOKE SO I TOLD HIM NOT AS FAR BACK AS WE WERE RIGHT NOW, AND AS SOON AS WE GOT MOVING THE SMOKE WOULD BLOW AWAY, WHICH IT DID!

WITH A HISS OF THE BRAKES AND A SLIGHT TUG OUR TRAIN STARTED ROLLING, PICKING UP SPEED AS WE ROLLED PAST THE YARD OFFICE AND HEADED NORTH TOWARDS RED WING, AS WE PASSED THE NORTH SIDE OF THE

YARD WE ALSO PASSED THE DERAILED CARS OF A TACONITE TRAIN. THE CARS LAID OUT LIKE LEGO'S ALONG THE U.S. HIGHWAY PARALLELING US, WE PICKED UP SPEED SWIFTLY AND SOON WERE ROLLING 50 MPH WITH THE AFTERNOON HUMIDITY COOLING DOWN, SHOWING WHY PEOPLE POPULATED THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER OVER 200 YEARS AGO. WITH FISH AND SHADE, COOL WATER, LIFE WOULD BE PREFERRABLE TO GATHERING IN ANY CITY, AND SO MORE IMMIGRANTS MOVED TO THE MISSISSIPPI, AND MISSOURI RIVERS FOR EASY SETTLEMENT AND EASY FAMILY SUPPLICATION, AT THE TIME OF THIS DAY AND AGE FAMILIES WERE TRADERS, FISHERMEN, FARMERS, OR RIVERMEN. AND NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE THE 1700'S TO 2000'S. RAILROAD'S WERE A BIG FACTOR IN CHANGING THE QUALITY OF LIFE ALONG RIVER COMMUNITIES, AS WELL AS REMOTE LOCATIONS BRINGING NEWS OF FOREIGN PLACES, ENTERTAINMENT, POLITICAL NEWS, EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC WEALTH, EMPLOYMENT, AND MIGRATORY LABORERS, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS HOBOS! SIGHTSEERS WERE A COMMON SIGHT ON TRAINS, OFTEN CALLED FREE RAIL ENTHUSIASTS, THOSE LOOKING FOR A NEW HORIZON, AESTHETIC PLEASURE SEEKERS, BUT MORE OFTEN THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD DO ANY LABOR, OR FILL ANY POSITION TO ENSURE THEIR LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD, THE UNUNG HEROS! OUR TRAIN CONTINUED FURTHER UP TO RED WING WITH THE SIGHTS AND SMELLS OF WOODLANDS, RIVER, HOT STEEL, DIESEL SMOKE, AND THE WHEELS SANG THEIR SONG OF FLIGHT AND ADVENTURE, A MESMERISING SPIRIT THAT PROMISES AND DELIVERS A FLIGHT INTO THE FUTURE WHERE ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN.

AT RED WING WE ROLLED ACROSS THE DRAWBRIDGE TO PARALLEL A CAR UNLOADING LOT WHERE I ONCE DROVE BRAND NEW BUCK'S OFF CAR CARRIER'S, WASHED, AND DETAILED THEM FOR DELIVERY TO CAR SALES LOTS IN CENTRAL MINNESOTA. AND FURTHER WE ROLLED AS DAYTON'S BLUFF CAME INTO VIEW, WE ALSO PARALLELED PIGS EYE YARD, WHERE I USED TO COME IN TO TOWN ON THE MILWAUKEE ROAD, THE ORANGE AND BLACK LOCOMOTIVES THAT FEATURED THE TILTED SIGN WITH THE OVAL OF HIAWATHA ON ITS NOSE, ITS FAMOUS CABOOSSES WHERE I'D SEEK SHELTER FROM PERSISTENT RAINS. OR GAIN ICE COLD WATER ON SCORCHING DAYS, THE TRAIN NEVER SLOWED DOWN AS WE ROUNDED A CURVE LEAVING ST. PAUL AND SHOT OFF FOR MINNIEHOPELESS. PEOPLE WATCHING THE PASSAGE OF OUR FREIGHT TRAIN LIMO NEVER NOTICED US RIDING. SOON WE WERE STOPPED IN NORTHTOWN AWAITING A SIGNAL, PERMISSION TO ENTER THE YARD, I POINTED OUT A BAKERY TO GATHER DAY OLD PASTRIES WHEN I WOULD NEED A QUICK BITE, OR LOCATIONS OF OLD JUNGLES I'D STAY IN FROM YEARS GONE BY, AND

MONIKERS OF OLD HOBO'S I USED TO KNOW AND WORK WITH, OR THE DIFFERENT GENERAL FOODS FLOUR MILLS I USED TO PACKAGE FLOUR FOR DELIVERY TO MARKET. WHEN OUR TRAIN STARTED MOVING AGAIN I POINTED OUT WHERE HOBO QUEEN MPLS. JEWEL LIVES, THE LOCATING OF THE OLDEST GRAIN ELEVATOR IN MINNIEHOPELESS, NOW DEMOLISHED WHERE WATERBED LOU, KING ED TRAMP, SCOOP SHOVEL SCOTTY, IOWA BLACKIE, MT. DEW, A-No#1, SKYSAIL JACK, FRISCO JACK AND I WOULD SIGN EVERY TIME WE WOULD COME TO TOWN. THEN WE ROLLED INTO THE B.N. YARD AFTER THE SUN HAD SET, WE ROLLED TO A STOP AS I SPIED A CABOOSE ON A TRACK NEXT TO US, COLLINWOOD WAS LAMENTING OUR LOW WATER SUPPLY SO I TOLD HIM I COULD PROBABLY GET SOME FROM THE CABOOSE HE ASKED IF THAT WAS WISE, I GUESS HE WASN'T USED TO GETTING EXTRA WATER FROM THE RAILROAD, I JUST JUMPED OFF OUR CONTAINER WELL AND STROLLED OVER TO THE CABOOSE TO GRAB A CASE OR 2. WHILE INSIDE I GOT SEVERAL CREW PACKS, AND A COMPLETE RAILROAD FIRST AID KIT, THEN STROLLED BACK, I TOLD HIM THIS WOULD LAST US FOR AWHILE AND WE SHOULD SETTLE IN AND LET B.N. RUN WHEN THEY GET ORDERS, SO I ROLLED OUT MY SLEEPING BAG AND SETTLED IN FOR THE NIGHT.



CHAPTER 26

COLLINWOOD LAID OUT CARDBOARD AND I DID THE SAME, AND THEN OUR BURLINGTON NORTHERN LIMOUSINE ROLLED US DOWN THAT LONG TWIN SILVER LINE (THANK YOU BOB SEGER FOR LETTING ME USE A LINE FROM ONE OF YOUR SONGS!) THROUGH STAPLES, DILWORTH/FARGO, UP INTO THE BIGGER NIGGER YARD 5 MILES EAST OF WHY NOT MINOT AND THE AMTRACK STATION, OUR NEXT CREW CHANGE. THE VACANT WAREHOUSES LOOKED FORLORN, TOTALLY ABANDONED AFTER YEARS OF BEING USED TO MANUFACTURE AND SHIP FINESILVER BRAND OVERALLS ALL OVER THE MIDWEST, THERE WERE NO HOBO'S WAITING ON THE DOCKS FOR NIGHT TO COME SO THEY COULD CATCH OUT, OR AT LEAST DRINK A FEW BEERS AND WATCH TRAINS PASS BY, THE LAST OF CIVILIZATION CAME INTO VIEW AT THE AMTRASH OFFICE THE OLD CREW WALKED OFF AND THE NEW CREW GOT ON, THEN WE FINALLY ENTERED THE FAMOUS PRAIRIE THAT GARRISON KEILLOR HAD THE RADIO SHOW - A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION -

TELLING STORIES ABOUT LIFE IN WESTERN MINNESOTA! AND AS THE SUN SANK SLOWLY INTO THE WEST (DAMN! I SOUND LIKE AN ANNOUNCER ON AN OLD WESTERN T.V. SHOW) IT WAS TIME TO RELAX AND ENJOY THE VIEW AS WE WOULD TRAVEL, THE NEXT 400 MILES OR MORE OF PRAIRIE, WHEAT FIELDS, GRASSLANDS, AND THE ONLY SYMBOL OF CIVILIZATION - A THIN 2 LANE U.S. HIGHWAY WITH A CAR OR TRUCK SEEN EVERY HALF HOUR! THE ENTIRE WAY INTO GLASGOW MONTANA WAS ONLY A WIND, SUN, AND PRAIRIE ALL THE WAY INTO OUR CREW CHANGE, THIS LITTLE VILLAGE WAS SETTLED BY SCOTTISH ARISTOCRATS WHO WANTED TO LIVE IN THE WEST LIKE COWBOYS BUT ENDED UP BECOMING LAND OWNERS AND THE LAND STRETCHED FOR MILES IN EVERY DIRECTION. FLAT, WINDSWEPT, OPEN, TREELESS, CREATED FOR ONLY A FEW THINGS, WHEAT, CATTLE GRAZING, WIDE OPEN SPACE TO WANDER AND PONDER ALL THINGS IN LIFE, TIME TO THINK, AND EVALUATE HOW THIS LAND CAN BE SHARED BY ALL PEOPLE, INCLUDING HOBO'S. GLASGOW IS HOT IN THE SUMMER SUN, AND VERY TREELESS, THE LAST TREES I SAW WERE IN MINNIEHOPELESS, AND THE NEXT TREES I WOULD SEE WOULD BE AT GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, THAT AND THE CABOOSE MOTEL. THE PARK WAS CREATED TO HIGHLIGHT THE WATERTON GLACIER WHICH IS NOW SEVERAL HUNDRED TONS SMALLER BECAUSE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GASES, BUT WHILE WE WERE TRAVELING THE HIGHLINE IT WAS STILL AS HUGE AS EVER AND TOURISTS WOULD VISIT BY THE THOUSANDS.

WE FLEW DOWN THE TRACKS TOWARD KALISPELL AND THE FINAL MILES TO WHITEFISH, WITH AN IMMENSE FOREST OF PONDEROSA PINE WE BREATHED THE CLEANEST, AL.BE.IT. THINEST AIR, AND PASSED HUGE HERDS OF ELK, AND DEER FEEDING IN THE SPARSE FIELDS BETWEEN THE TREES. WE ALSO PASSED SEVERAL OTHER FREIGHT TRAINS AS WE NEARED WHITEFISH, BY THEN IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON TO EVENING, THE NIGHT WAS CLOSING IN, THE AIR HAD COOLED CONSIDERABLY GOING FROM 70° TO 40° IN THE SPACE OF AN HOUR. I SEARCHED AS THE TRAIN ENTERED THE YARD FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD WAREHOUSE WHICH WOULD BE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF WHERE WE WOULD FINALLY STOP, THIS WAREHOUSE HAD BEEN ABANDONED AND LOCKED UP BUT HAD AN AWNING AND LARGE DOCK THAT OTHER HOBO'S HAD USED AS A BED OVER THE YEARS. OUR TRAIN PULLED INTO THE YARD AND PROCEEDED TO THE INBOUND TRACK AND STOPPED WITH OUR BOXCAR DOOR ACROSS FROM THE WAREHOUSE, I WAS ROLLED UP AND WALKED TO THE DOCK WITH COLLINWOOD CLOSE BEHIND, NO ONE WAS SLEEPING HERE FOR NOW, BUT THERE WERE MONIKERS DRAWN ALL OVER ITS WALLS. SOON I WAS READING THE BILL OF FARE FROM ALL THE MONIKERS LEFT BEHIND, COLLINWOOD WAS SOON BESIDE

ME READING AS WELL, MARVELING AT THE ARTISTRY IN THE CREATION OF THE DESIGNS THAT ACCOMPANIED EACH MONIKER. MORE ARTISTIC THAN WHAT I WOULD DRAW WITH THE TEXAS FLAG, CROSSED EYES, AN OPEN MOUTH, AND A TONGUE WAGGING IN THE WIND. THERE WERE SALUTATIONS TO OTHER HOBO'S, AND DIRECTIONS THEY WERE TRAVELING, WHAT TOWNS THEY AVOID, PLACES THAT WOULD AID A HUNGRY HOBO, INVITATIONS TO GATHERINGS OR PARTIES, OFFERS TO "GET A HOBO HIRED ONTO A JOB" AT CANNERIES. MUCH OF THIS BILL OF FARE CONCERNED POETRY, SONGS, OR GENERAL DOODLING AS WAITING FOR A TRAIN MEANT SPENDING A LOT OF TIME WAITING, COLLINWOOD ASKED ME HOW MANY HOBO'S WOULD COME THROUGH THIS YARD, "AROUND 10-15 A WEEK!, OR 23-25 A MONTH." THIS ROUTE WAS WELL TRAVELED THEN AND STILL IS NOW, I USED TO DROP OFF HERE TO PLAY PIANO IN THE WINTERTIME WHEN A HISTORIC LANDMARK HOTEL AND BAR WOULD OPEN UP FOR POWDER BUMS (SKIERS) WHO WOULD COME FOR WINTER BUSINESS, MOSTLY BLUES AND JAZZ THAT I'D LEARNED TO PLAY MANY YEARS EARLIER IN NEW ORLEANS.

MY TEACHERS WERE BOTH PROFESSOR LONG HAIR AND DR. JOHN, THE LATTER WAS A MAJOR FAN OF THE FORMER, DR. JOHN ADMIRER PROFESSOR LONG HAIR BECAUSE HIS MASTERY OF THE PIANO THAT CAME FROM HIS YOUTH FINDING PIANOS IN ANY ALLEY AND REPAIRING THEM, AND TUNING THEM FOR RESALE. IN THE PROCESS THE PROFESSOR LEARNED HIS PLAYING STYLE BY LISTENING TO RECORDS BY SCOTT JOPLIN THEN PERFORMING ON "CONGO SQUARE" WHERE MANY BLACK AMERICANS (BACK THEN THEY REFERRED TO THEMSELVES AS BLACK, NOT AFRICAN AMERICAN!) EXERCISED THEIR HERITAGE. THE PROFESSOR WAS 89 WHEN HE TAUGHT ME HIS HONKY-TONK/JAZZ/BLUES STYLE OF PIANO, BETWEEN HIM AND DR. JOHN (IN REALITY MACK REBENACK) I ENJOYED YET ANOTHER WAY TO FIND EMPLOYMENT WHILE HOBOING! ALTHOUGH IT WAS SITUATIONAL AT BEST FOR IT TOOK TIME TO FIND BARS AND NIGHTCLUBS TO PERFORM IN, I WAS STILL WANTING TO PLAY HERE IN WHITEFISH AND MAKE SOME TRAVELING CASH, IT WOULD NOT BE THE CASE, AND THAT LEFT ME WITH CONTINUING THIS TRIP WITH COLLINWOOD KID ACROSS FLAT HEAD LAKE, AND THROUGH FLAT HEAD TUNNEL!

AN AUTHOR FROM WHITEFISH, CHRISTOPHER PAOLINI, WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL WHEN HE FIRST PUBLISHED ERAGON, THE FIRST OF A 4 BOOK SERIES ENTITLED THE INHERITANCE SERIES, FROM HIS IMAGINATION AND THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE HE ENVISIONED A WORLD OF DRAGONS, VILLAGERS, ROYALTY,

DWARVES, ELVES, WIZARDS, PLUS BOTH DARK AND BRIGHT MAGIC. HIS IMAGINATION REAPED HIM A CAREER, MARRIAGE, AND 3 CHILDREN, WHILE PENNING (OR WORD PROCESSING) 3 MORE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL BOOKS. AND THIS WAS THE COUNTRYSIDE THAT INSPIRED HIS FANTASY WORLD THAT COLLINWOOD KID AND I WERE TRAVELING THROUGH, UP A RAIL ROUTE CLIMBING A HIGH MOUNTAIN, PAST A CRYSTAL LAKE WHOSE SURFACE WAS SMOOTH AS GLASS, SNOW COVERING THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS, A QUIET PIECE OF HEAVEN ON EARTH. IS IT ANY WONDER WHY THE CITIZENS OF MONTANA WANT TO PROTECT THEIR STATE FROM ENCROACHING DEVELOPMENT, BOTH TRIBAL CITIZENS AND (MOSTLY) WHITE CITIZENS?, THEN WE PLUNGED INTO A LONG TUNNEL WITH A WALL MOUNTED LIGHT EVERY 1/4 MILE TO EMERGE THE WESTERN PORTAL LIKE A SCREAMING BANSHEE WITH WIND BLAZING BY, AND STILL WE HAD FURTHER TO CLIMB THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TO REACH THE APEX. AT THIS POINT WE ROLLED ALONG IN SILENCE WATCHING THE PASSING MOUNTAIN'S AND VALLEY'S WITH A FEELING (FOR ME AT LEAST) THAT WE WERE JUST A THOUGHT TO THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD, A MINOR CREATION IN THE IMMENSE WORLD WE INHABIT, AND YET WE WERE KINGS MINUS A CROWN, HOBO'S OF THE FIRST ORDER. ROYALTY RIDING TO THE PARADISE OF THE WEST, THEN DOWNHILL WE SAILED ON THE BIGGEST ROLLER COASTER FLYING THROUGH "THE DEVILS MILE" (MILE MARKER 666, THERE IS ANOTHER DEVIL'S MILE ON THE FORMER DELAWARE & HUDSON, WHERE A BRANCH RUNS DOWN THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER INTO HARRISBURG) THROUGH A 7+1/2 MILE TUNNEL INTO PUGET SOUND WHERE THE TRAIN BROKE UP, 1/2 OF IT STAYING HERE, THE OTHER 1/2 OF IT GOING UP TO ASTORIA. DENSE FOG ROLLS IN AFTER DARK, AND RAIN IS A CONSTANT HERE ALL YEAR LONG, BEING STRANDED HERE OVER NIGHT CAN BE UNCOMFORTABLE, AND SLEEPING UNDER A BRIDGE IS A STEREOTYPE, BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE DID, LES WAS NOT CONTENT WITH A BRIDGE ABUTMENT. HE WANDERED ALL OVER THE UPPER AREA LOOKING FOR A PATCH OF GRASS, BUT I LET HIM KNOW THAT IT RAINS HERE OVERNIGHT IN VOLUMES, SO FINALLY I GOT HIM TO JOIN ME UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE BY FIRST TELLING HIM "MAMA DIDN'T RAISE ME TO BE A MOUNTAIN GOAT." COLLINWOOD KID RELENTED BUT HIS CONSTANT ARGUMENT WAS THAT HE MIGHT FALL OFF THE CONCRETE ABUTMENT OVERNIGHT, I TOLD HIM IT WAS SAFE STATING "REMEMBER I LIVE HERE, YOU'RE THE VISITOR," THE FALL MIGHT BE ABRUPT, BUT WOULD DO NO LASTING DAMAGE. WITH THAT I SETTLED IN FOR SOME MUCH NEEDED REST, AND WITH FOGHORNS SOUNDING, AND RAIN FALLING I SLEPT QUITE SOUNDLY, NO TRAINS RAN BY THAT NIGHT AND WE WERE FACED THE NEXT MORNING WITH RIDING A CITY BUS TO SEATTLE, THAT CITY THAT I FLEW BACK INTO AFTER 10 YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE U.S. ARMY, REMEMBERING THIS I AVOIDED RETURNING TO PLACES THAT

SPARKED MEMORIES OF MY SERVICE. AND EVEN THOUGH COLLINWOOD KID ASKED, ALL I TOLD HIM WAS "I WAS FLOWN TO MCCORD AIR FORCE BASE, COMMUTED TO SEATTLE, FLEW TO WASHINGTON D.C, EXITED THE ARMY AFTER FIRST SIGNING A NON DISCLOSURE ACT FORM AND THAT'S ALL I'LL TELL YOU." THE NEXT MORNING WE RODE A CITY COMMUTER BUS THE LAST 15 MILES TO SEATTLE HEADING FOR INTER-BAY YARD, ORIGINALLY BUILT BY THE GREAT NORTHERN BUT NOW CALLED BURLINGTON NORTHERN (ONCE AGAIN EITHER BIGGER NIGGER, OR BUGGER NOSE, WHICH EVER NAME YOU PREFER) THE BRIDGE WE SAT UNDER WAS STREWN WITH POUNDS AND POUNDS OF GARBAGE, I COULD SIT IT OUT, BUT COLLINWOOD LEFT TO GRAB A COUPLE OF TRASH BAGS.

TO ME THIS WAS A QUICK CATCH OUT BUT COLLINWOOD KID COULDN'T LEAVE IT ALONE, HE GRABBED HANDS FULL OF TRASH SMEARED WITH GOD KNOWS WHAT AND SHOVED THEM INTO EACH TRASH BAG, HE DOESN'T LIKE A FILTHY CATCH OUT AND I AGREE. BUT IT'S A NEVER ENDING CYCLE, MOST LIKELY AS SOON AS WE LEFT, OR BY THE NEXT DAY THE CATCH OUT WOULD BE JUST AS FILTHY, MOSTLY IT WOULD BE LOCALS, AND THE DRUG ADDICTED COMING DOWN TO THE RAILYARD AND UPON FINDING NO HOBO TO BOTHER OR HARASS THEY'D SIT DOWN IN THE CATCH-OUT AND TRASH THE PLACE AFTER GETTING "STONED" THUS TREATING THE HOBO'S HOME LIKE THEY DO THEIR OWN HOME! COLLINWOOD KID HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH A YOUNG MAN ON THE INTERNET WHO WANTED TO EXPERIENCE THE ART OF TRAIN RIDING, A DIFFERENT ADVENTURE THAN WHAT I ENJOY AND LIVE, YUPPIE HOBOING, A WEIRD WAY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY TRAVELER TO EXPERIENCE A HOBO'S TRAVEL WITHOUT ACTUALLY BEING A HOBO. I'D HEARD OF YUPPIE HOBO'S, PEOPLE WHO TRY TO EXPERIENCE OUR INHERITANCE WITHOUT ACTUALLY LIVING OUR LIFE, IT'S THE EXPERIENCE OF MOVEMENT AND THE ART OF AVOIDING A RAILROAD POLICE OFFICE AND INVADING A RAILYARD, MORE LIKE A MILITARY EXERCISE THAN AN ADVENTURE, OR A VACATION. BECAUSE THEY WERE UPSTANDING CITIZENS THEY COULD CALL TO THE RAILROAD POLICE AND REPORT A POSSIBLE BREAK IN, VANDALIZATION OF RAILROAD EQUIPMENT OR FREIGHT CONTAINERS, AND THESE FEDERAL POLICE WOULD RUN OFF TO INVESTIGATE RESEMBLING THE KEYSTONE COPS INSTEAD OF RAILROAD POLICE. THE YUPPIE HOBO'S ENJOYING A LIVE COMEDY DISPLAY ENTERTAINING THEMSELVES AND NOT REALIZING THE PROBLEMS THEY WERE CAUSING FOR RAILROAD EMPLOYEES OR PEOPLE WHO DEPEND ON RAILROAD'S FOR THEIR TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM WORK, THE RAILROAD EMPLOYEES AND THE HOBO'S!

COLLINWOOD KID CALLED THIS YOUNG MAN TO HOOK UP WITH HIM AND TOLD HIM WE'D ALL GO RIDING TOGETHER FROM SEATTLE TO VANS CREWY (VANCOUVER), HE TOOK AN HOUR TO GET THIS "KID" TO COME ACROSS TOWN TO INTER-BAY YARD AS WE 3 MADE OUR INTRODUCTIONS WITH EACH OTHER AND COLLINWOOD KID TOOK THE HIM ON A SHORT TOUR OF THE TRAIN YARD. I WAS AMAZED AT THE KNOWLEDGE COLLINWOOD KID HAD CONCERNING FREIGHT TRAIN YARDS, EVIDENTLY BEING AROUND MAJOR METROPOLITAN CITY TRAIN YARDS AND RECREATIONALLY JUMPING FREIGHT TRAINS GAVE HIM A KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSPORTATION, CHEMICALS IN TRANSIT, AND FREIGHT MOVEMENT, TIME SCHEDULES ARE ANOTHER FACTOR ALTOGETHER. RAILROAD'S RUN ON TONNAGE NOT TIME SCHEDULES, ALTHOUGH THIS IS CHANGING IN THE 21ST CENTURY, WE'D HAVE TO WATCH FREIGHT CARS, LOCOMOTIVES, FREIGHT TRAIN MAKE UP, AND WHICH TRACK THE TRAIN WAS ON, MAINLINE OR PASSING, AFTER NOT CATCHING A TRAIN AT INTER-BAY WE TOOK A BUS THROUGH DOWNTOWN SEATTLE AND TRIED TO CATCH OUT ON A U.P. INTERMODAL YARD, BUT NOTHING WAS MOVING THERE.

I WAS GETTING TIRED SO WE SLEPT NEXT TO THE B.N. MAIN WITHOUT ANY RAIN FALLING THAT NIGHT, BY THE NEXT MORNING I WAS UP AND PACKED BUT HAD TO WAKE UP COLLINWOOD KID AND THE YOUNG MAN, BY 10:00 AM A B.N. STOPPED ON A SIGNAL AND WE ALL SCRAMBLED ON BOARD, FINALLY WE WERE LEAVING SEATTLE! AS WE RODE DOWN TO EVERETT I ASKED THE YOUNGSTER TO WATCH AND SEE IF ANYONE WAS LOOKING AT US, AFTER A FEW MINUTES HE SAID NO, SO I TOLD HIM "NOW YOU'VE METAMORPHASIZED, YOU'VE BECOME A PART OF THE TRAIN, INVISIBLE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD," THIS BROUGHT THE BIGGEST SMILE TO HIM THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN! OUR TRAVELS CONTINUED SWIFTLY TO A SUNNY WINDSWEPT EVERETT, THE STATE CAPITOL WHERE THE YARD IS OPEN AND THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE AND NO PLACE TO RUN, WE SAT QUIETLY AS YARD CREWS SWITCHED FREIGHT CARS BACK AND FORTH ON AND OFF OUR TRAIN WAITING FOR A HISS AND A TUG SIGNALING WE WERE CONTINUING FURTHER SOUTH, A TENSE MOMENT OF WORRY FROM BEING "PINCHED BY THE BULL," BUT OUR WORRY WAS UNFOUNDED AS NO ONE TRIED TO ACCOST US FOR TRESPASSING ON B.N. RAILROAD PROPERTY. AND SOON WE WERE BACK IN THE FOREST OF WESTERN WASHINGTON STATE DOTTED WITH GIANT FIR TREES, NO PARALLEL ROADS WITH TOURISTS OR COUNTY SHERIFF'S, ONLY US AND THE FREIGHT TRAIN BIASecting THE LAND OF DEER, BEAR, AND BIG FOOT. I RODE WITH A HOBO

NAMED BIG FOOT ONE TIME OUT OF BIEBER INTO OROVILLE BUT HE WAS NO RELATION TO THE FABLED FURRY GIANT OF THE WASHINGTON FORESTS, THAT HOBO WAS FROM KENTUCKY AND THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGHTING OF A FURRY BIG FOOT IN KENTUCKY. OUR TRAIN PULLED INTO A HAZY YARD AT KELSO, REMOTE AND FOREBODING, BEING STUCK HERE WAS NOT AN OPTION AS THE NEXT TRAIN OUT MIGHT NOT ARRIVE FOR 2 OR 3 DAYS, WHILE THE CREW SWITCHED CARS WE HAD CHANGING CARS TO CONTINUE TO VANSCREWY, WE RODE OUT HID IN THE CLASSIC BOXCAR AND SILENTLY ROLLED INTO THE VANSCREWY YARD.

WE HAD TO WAIT UNTIL THE BULL RODE PAST OUR TRAIN SCANNING FOR TRESSPASSERS THEN QUICKLY CREPT OFF THE TRAIN INTO THE SURROUNDING WOODS, WITH THIS YOUNG MAN'S DESTINATION FINALLY BEING REACHED I BEGAN THE ARDORUS TASK OF WALKING HIM AROUND THE TRAIN YARD TO AMTRASH USING CITY STREETS, BUT FIRST WALKING HIM AND COLLINWOOD KID BY THE SCARE HOUSE. (ONCE AGAIN THE SHARE HOUSE, JOHN "COAL TRAIN" EASLEY HAS DEFINATIVE IDEAS CONCERNING THE IDEOLOGY OF THE INDIVIDUALS STAYING THERE) UPON LEAVING HIM TO PONDER ALL HE HAD EXPERIENCED ON HIS QUEST COLLINWOOD KID STATED HE WANTED TO IMMEDIATELY CATCH-OUT AGAIN, HE HAD A LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME FOR HIS VACATION AND WANTED TO SEE AS MUCH COUNTRYSIDE AS POSSIBLE BEFORE HE HAD TO RETURN TO CLEVELAND AND HIS 9-5 LIFE. I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND FOLKS WHO TRY TO EXPERIENCE A LIFETIME IN A FEW DAYS, MOST WILL ATTAIN INTERNATIONAL STAMPS IN THEIR PASSPORT TO SHOW WHERE THEY'VE BEEN BUT NEVER REMEMBER WHAT THEY'VE SEEN, TOO HIGH A SPEED TO ENJOY LIFE! I HUMORED HIM BY TAKING HIM ON THE FREE TROLLEY FROM VANSCREWY TO BURNSIDE AVENUE IN PORTLAND, CATCHING A CITY BUS TO THE U.P. SIDING HE WAS TALKING ABOUT, AND FOUND A HOPPER TRAIN ALREADY SITTING AT THE LOCATION, NOT KNOWING IF THIS WOULD LEAVE THAT NIGHT OR THE NEXT DAY WE "SLEPT ON BOARD" HOPING THIS TRAIN WOULD ALLOW US A PEACEFUL REST! (BOY WERE WE WRONG!) IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT WE WERE AWOKEN IN THE NIGHT TO BEING PELTED BY MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF CORN THROWN ON US, IT RESEMBLED BEING UNDER A GRAIN LOADER CHUTE AT A GRAIN ELEVATOR, WE BOTH CAME AWAKE AND OUT OF OUR SLEEPING BAGS QUICKLY TO INVESTIGATE. SEARCHING AROUND I SAW LOCAL TEENAGERS ON TOP OF THE CAR LAUGHING AND THROWING HANDFULL'S OF CORN OVER THE SIDE AND ENDS OF THE HOPPER, COLLINWOOD KID HAD A RAILROAD SCANNER WITH HIM, SO I BORROWED IT AND CLIMBED THE SIDE OF THE CAR IMPERSONATING A U.P. RAILROAD COP. UPON REACHING THE TOP

WITH THE SCANNER VOLUME TURNED UP, AND SHINNING A FLASHLIGHT I YELLED "UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD POLICE," THAT'S ALL IT TOOK, THE TEENAGERS TOOK OFF RUNNING DOWN THE TOPS OF ALL THE HOPPER CARS AN OPPOSITE DIRECTION, AND WE WERE LEFT IN PEACE FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT!

IN THE MORNING WE WERE STILL AT THIS SAME SIDING AND I WAS INSISTING ON MAKING SOME COFFEE, I ALWAYS CARRIED INSTANT TASTERS CHOICE WHICH REMINDED ME OF THE COFFEE HOUSES IN NEW ORLEANS, COLLINWOOD KID STATED WE DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME BUT I KNEW I COULD MAKE IT IN LESS THAN 3 MINUTES. USING A 5 MINUTE FUSE I HEATED 2 BEER CANS OF WATER AND MADE MY COFFEE THEN DOUSED THE FUSEE, THEN GOT BACK ON BOARD THE WAITING TRAIN, COLLINWOOD GOT OFF TO DEFICATE WHEN THE TRAIN STARTED MOVING, HE TOLD ME TO BAIL HIS GEAR BUT THE CONTENTS WERE ALL OVER THE CAR. I BAILED THIS BY THROWING BAGS FULL OF ITEMS, AND THE REST I WADDED UP IN HIS SLEEPING BAG, THE TRAIN SUDDENLY CAME TO A STOP COLLINWOOD KID SAID "I'VE SEEN CLEANER BAILS THAN THAT," TO WHICH I REPLIED "I HAVE TOO, BUT NOT WHEN YOUR GEAR IS SPREAD ALL OVER THE CAR REMEMBER THIS IS A FREIGHT CAR - NOT YOUR HOUSE!" (I'VE BEEN TO COLLINWOOD'S HOUSE AND I USED TO REFER TO IT AS THE URBAN ARCHEOLOGY PROJECT) SEEING THE TRAIN HAD STOPPED WE REBOARDED AND AFTER ANOTHER HOUR COLLINWOOD DECIDED TO GO FORWARD TO SEE WHERE THE PROBLEM WAS, AFTER 1/2 AN HOUR HE CAME BACK AND SAID HE WAS TALKING TO A U.P. RAILROAD EMPLOYEE. WHO TOLD HIM SOMEONE TRIED TO BEAT THE TRAIN OVER THE CROSSING BUT DIDN'T QUITE MAKE IT, HIS CAR WAS STRUCK BY THE TRAIN, WHEN COLLINWOOD ASKED IF THE MAN WAS INJURED THE RAILROAD EMPLOYEE STATED "HE'S ALRIGHT BUT HE PROBABLY HAS A CASE OF THE BROWN PANTS DISEASE!" OUR TRAIN WAS RELEASED BY THE DISPATCHER AS WE CONTINUED ON EAST TOWARD THE DALLES, AND HERMISTON OREGON, THERE'S A IMMENSE TRAIN YARD HERE NAMED AFTER THE ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION SUPERINTENDENT - WALTER HINKLE, ORIGINALLY NAMED "HINKLE'S YARD IT IS NOW JUST CALLED HINKLE YARD, HERE TRAINS WERE BACKED UP AS THAT YEAR RAILROAD'S NATIONWIDE WERE FACING A TRANSPORTATION STRIKE. AND WE COULD BE STUCK HERE BETWEEN 1 DAY TO 1 MONTH, THAT LEFT ONLY AMTRASH RUNNING THROUGH THE YARD, THE GOVERNMENT OWNS AMTRASH AND NO MATTER HOW MANY RAILROAD'S STOP RUNNING DUE TO A STRIKE AMTRASH WILL CONTINUE TO ROLL SO COLLINWOOD KID WALKED TO THE AMTRASH OFFICE WHICH RESEMBLES A CITY BUS STATION.

WELL THAT WAS ONLY RIGHT BECAUSE THE CITY BUS LINE FROM THE HERMISTON TERMINAL RUNS TO AND FROM HINKLE YARD UPON THE APPROACH TO THE AMTRASH STATION TOOK US AROUND THE TRAIN YARD WHICH WAS BUILT WITH TONS OF FILL, EVERY SMALL VALLEY AND GORGE WAS FILLED WITH SCRAP ROCK AND DIRT. LEVELED COMPLETELY AND FLAT ENOUGH TO ROLL A BALL FROM THE EAST END TO THE WEST END WITH ONE ROLL, WE CAME ACROSS CRAZY ANGEL AND HIS LADY FRIEND WAITING OUT THE RAILROAD STRIKE THEY NEEDED FOOD, I DIDN'T HAVE A WHOLE LOT BUT I WAS CARRYING SOME APPLES. COLLINWOOD KID DIDN'T WANT ME TO GIVE THEM ANY FOOD BUT I WAS RAISED A DIFFERENT WAY, IF I HAD EXTRA AND THE OTHER PERSON DIDN'T I'D SHARE WITH THEM - WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND AND THAT'S THE WAY IT IS! AFTER HELPING CRAZY ANGEL AND HIS LADY WE WENT TO THE SPARSE AMTRASH STATION AND WAITED FOR THE PASSENGER TRAIN TO ARRIVE, WHEN IT DID COLLINWOOD GAVE ME THE EXCESS CASH IN HIS POCKET AND BOARDED AMTRASH BOUND FOR CLEVELAND, 16 HOURS LATER THE NATIONAL STRIKE WAS SETTLED AND I WAS HEADED FOR LA GRANDE, BOISE, POCATELLO, AND OGGY DOG. LATER I HEARD THAT A CONTAINER BEING SHIPPED ON U.P. HAD BEEN BROKEN INTO AND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS OF FOOD STAMPS WERE STOLEN, WHEN I ARRIVED IN OGGY DOG I HAD JUST MISSED BEING PICKED UP AND QUESTIONED BY THE F.B.I. OVER THE INCIDENT!

SOMETIMES THE ROAD IS A FICKLE MISTRESS, LEADING A HOBO TO DIRECTIONS AND PLACES, OR SIDINGS IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, UNEXPECTED INCIDENTS ARRIVE AT THE ODDEST OF TIMES, OFTEN I HAVE BOARDED AT LOCATIONS TO TRAVEL MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS BUT ENDED UP IN CITIES, TOWNS, AND OTHER PLACES I DID NOT WANT TO GO TO. AN EXAMPLE IF THIS WAS TRAVELING TO CHICAGO FOR A POETRY EVENT ON THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL OUT OF MEMPHIS MY TRAIN WENT THROUGH CENTRALIA, INTO EFFINGHAM, BUT UPON LEAVING DID NOT STOP IN MARKHAM YARD BUT INSTEAD BLEW THROUGH TO THE TOWN OF BATTLE CREEK MICHIGAN AND CAME TO A STOP IN MONTREAL CANADA. WELL THIS WAS BLIZZARE AND INCONVENIENT AS I WAS NOT CANADIAN, AND DIDN'T HAVE A PASSPORT OR VISA SO MY STYLE WAS THAT OF A "RECONNISANCE SOLDIER" INVESTIGATING A WAY TO SLIDE OUT SIGHT-UNSEEN, I DIDN'T WANT THE MOUNTED POLICE ON MY TRAIL LIKE THE ONES WHO CHASED AL CAPONE'S RUM RUNNERS ACROSS A FROZEN LAKE ERIE BACK IN THE 1930'S! MY RIDE TO CANADA WAS

A MISTAKE, SO I LEFT OUT THE SAME WAY I CAME IN, WAITING IN THE CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILROAD YARD FOR 6-7 HOURS AND CATCHING A BOXCAR BACK TO CHAMPAIGN WHICH HAD ME BACK WHERE I STARTED, SORT OF "A HUMAN SLINGSHOT!"

CHAPTER 27

WELL AS YOU CAN NOW SEE I DON'T TAKE MYSELF TOO SERIOUSLY, AND AS THE READERS DIGEST USED TO SAY: "LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE" WHICH SHOWS YOU SOMEONE THERE MIGHT BE DRINKING TOO MUCH OF THEIR MEDICINE, SO BACK IN CHAMPAIGN I TRIED ONCE AGAIN AND FINALLY MADE IT TO MARKHAM YARD IN SOUTHEAST CHICAGO AND I FORGOT THE REASON I WAS GOING UP THERE, THUS TURNED AROUND AND WENT BACK SOUTH! I DON'T MEAN TO SOUND GLIB, OR INSULTING WITH THESE PAGES AND WORDS, ALTHOUGH SOMEONE MIGHT DECIDE THAT THIS IS ALL I CAN DO, TO ME THE BEST THING I LIFE IS TO FIND AN EVENT OR ACT IN YOUR LIFE IN WHICH YOU CAN LAUGH ABOUT IT!, BECAUSE IF YOU CAN'T FIND SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE DONE THAT IS CRAZY OR FOOLISH TO LAUGH AT, THEN YOU'RE LIVING THE WRONG LIFE! BEING A HOBO AND A CITIZEN OF THE HOBO NATION - WHETHER NATURALIZED, OR NATURALLY BORN - IS AN HONOR BECAUSE I AS WELL AS OTHERS OF OUR NATION REPRESENT THE BEST OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN, LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR, AIDING OTHERS IN THEIR TIME OF NEED, LIVING BY UTILIZING THE PLANTS AND HERBS THAT THE ONE AS I PERCEIVE AS GOD GAVE ALL PEOPLE TO USE. (INCIDENTALLY I'M NOT WRITING ABOUT THE "HERB" THAT YOU SMOKE, SOMETIMES THAT IS MIXED WITH PCP, OR SPRAYED WITH SCOTCH GUARD, IF IT'S STOMPED ON, LITERALLY STOMPED ON, SOMEONE WENT OUTSIDE AND STOMPED ON IT, NOW IT'S LOADED WITH INSECTICIDE AND ANIMAL FECES, OR EVEN HUMAN FECES, YOU MIGHT THINK ABOUT THAT BEFORE YOU SMOKE THAT CRAP!) TRAVELING WITH YOUR FACE IN THE WIND, SIMILAR TO BEING A MOTORCYCLE RIDER, LIVING OUR LIVES WITHOUT LEAVING A CARBON FOOTPRINT, OR STICKING OUR HEADS US THE A\$\$ OF SOMEONE ELSE LIKE THE C.I.A. OR F.B.I, AND DOING UNTO OTHERS AS WE WOULD HAVE DO UNTO US WHICH IS SOMETHING NEITHER OUR POLITICIANS IN CONGRESS NOR THE D.O.D. HAS LEARNED HOW TO DO! Y'KNOW WE OF THE HOBO NATION MIGHT HAVE A BETTER IDEA ON HOW TO BE THE MODEL FOR WORLDWIDE LIVING, LOVING, ECONOMIC STABILITY, AND EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL PEOPLE, THE AMERICAN PUBLIC MIGHT WANT TO FOLLOW OUR EXAMPLE

BEFORE DONALD J. TRUMP CALLS UP MORE OF THE WHITE POWER NUTS CAUSING WORLD WAR 3, AND THE UNITED STATES IS NO MORE, OTHERWISE WE'LL SIT BACK, WATCH YOU DESTROY YOURSELVES, INHERIT THE REMAINS, AND START OVER AFTER FINDING ANOTHER GEORGE WASHINGTON, AND THE BEST CANDIDATE FOR THAT - THE NEXT KING OF THE HOBO'S! SO IN CLOSING I FEEL THE NEED TO STATE THAT WE ALL WILL CATCH THE WESTBOUND ONE DAY, SOME WILL HEAD TO THE HEAVEN PROMISED BY THEIR VERSION OF GOD, I WILL GO TO MY HEAVEN CREATED BY THE ONE I PERCEIVE AS GOD, AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH IMPRESSIVE, SOCIAL, AND EXPENSIVE THINGS YOU MANAGED IN YOUR LIVES, YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF DIGGING FECES FROM THE HONEY HOLES IN OUTHOUSES. AND IF YOU DO YOU'LL HAVE TO COME TO MY HEAVEN TO ASK ME, A HOBO, FOR ADVICE ON THE ACTIVITY BECAUSE: I'VE DONE THAT KIND OF JOB TOO!

SEE YA' DOWN THE ROAD

THE TEXAS MADMAN - GRAND DUKE OF THE HOBO'S

